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The Permeability of History and Literature

in *Santa Evita* and *La Fiesta del Chivo*

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The Permeability of History and Literature in *Santa Evita* and *La Fiesta del Chivo*

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Para Antonio, con quien comparto todas mis alegrías.

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The Permeability of History and Literature
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The present study provides an analysis of two New Historical Novels: Santa Evita (1995) by Tomás Eloy Martínez and La Fiesta del Chivo (2000) by Mario Vargas Llosa. I will approach these novels from the perspective of Postmodernism. Both works deal with the topic of history and literature. How history and literature relate is a focal component of this project. The “writing” and “rewriting” of history are essential topics. Therefore, a revision of the historical reading and writing processes requires more than a unilateral vision of past events. In fact, numerous points of view are essential in order to understand how those in power have influenced the recording of history. The power of knowledge then introduces the idea of the legitimization of history.

This project also reviews the differences between Modernism and Postmodernism. Several critical views are covered. Tomás Eloy Martínez's novel Santa Evita illustrates a variety of postmodern characteristics. Since Postmodernism allows the artist to revise and question conventional and dogmatic structures, then parody and myth are explored. At the same time, examples of myth show how Martínez constructs his narrative and how history portrayed Eva Perón. Fiction and history therefore open the discussion of the use of the documents in Martínez's novel. On the other hand, an explanation of simulacra and simulation shed light on the different ways in which Eva created herself and the ways in which others recreated her.

In contrast, La Fiesta del Chivo is a novel about a dictatorship, it is important then to understand how dictatorships have controlled and molded societies for years in Latin America. I approach this novel from the perspective of the postmodern text. The way in which reality and fiction come together will introduce the topic of metafiction. Vargas Llosa's novel shows how memory and myth play an important role in literature. In the case of the Dominican Republic, it is clear how history has perpetuated myths. The author also includes a variety of voices, which do not fall in the category of the official history. These voices shed light onto previous ideas about the past and our understanding of it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER ONE. Reconsidering the past	9
CHAPTER TWO. The projection of a story	34
CHAPTER THREE. The laberynth of memory	85
CONCLUSION	126
BIBLIOGRAPHY	133
VITA.....	141

INTRODUCTION

In the New Historical Latin American Novel, history and fiction have come together and have created a new model. This new model favors multiplicity, permeability, and change, since different perspectives, models and flexibility are the emphasis. This project will incorporate such ideas and two prolific and influential authors in Latin America: Tomás Eloy Martínez and Mario Vargas Llosa. Specifically I will center my attention on two of their novels: Santa Evita (1995) and La Fiesta del Chivo (2000).

Tomás Eloy Martínez (b. Tucumán, Argentina, 1934) has been a main intellectual authority in Latin America. Simultaneous with the rise and fall of *peronismo* in 1957 the author completed his studies. A significant part of his work shows how *peronismo* was influential in his narrative themes. When he was a teenager, he was already writing for the newspaper *La Gaceta*. In 1961, Martínez wrote La obra de Ayala y Torre Nilsson en las estructuras del cine argentino. This was a study about the work of two well-known Argentine filmmakers: Fernando Ayala and Leopoldo Torre Nilsson.

At the same time, Martínez is known for his poems and short stories and for his career as a journalist. He was a film critic for the newspaper *La Nación*, and in 1965 became editor-in-chief of the weekly magazine *Primera Plana*. The Argentine author also directed *Panorama* and *La Opinión Cultural*. In 1969, he published his first novel: Sagrado. Four years later, Martínez published La pasión según Trelew. According to Nicolas Shumway, this book is outstanding because:

...in great detail Martínez prophetically describes the paradigm of military oppression that would brutalize Argentina between 1976 and 1983 [...] he included news reports, verbatim interviews, military decrees [...] The resulting prose collage forces the reader to become a co-narrator [...] the book suggests that Argentine reality defies any neat narrative line...(Tomás Eloy Martínez 335)

In 1975, Martínez went into exile. He lived in Caracas, Venezuela where he became editor of *Papel Literario*, a supplement of a newspaper in that country. During his exile, the writer published Los testigos de afuera (1978), a collection of short stories titled Lugar común de la muerte (1978) and Retrato de un artista enmascarado (1979), which are collections of essays. Nevertheless, he began to be recognized internationally in 1988 with the English translation of La novela de Perón. In this novel, published in 1985 the author defended the idea, among others, that the frontiers, which separate genres, are not precise. In 1991, he published La mano del amo. The title refers to the hand of the mother that can destroy. Additionally, the hand is: "...also the hand of memory, the hand of a conformist society [...] is the burden of life." (Shumway, Tomás Eloy Martínez 343)

Santa Evita was published in 1995. This novel tells the story, among many, of the obsession of a country with its First Lady: Eva Perón. The main character of the novel is a body, whose death provides it with a myth. According to Nicolas Shumway: "The author participated in the debates about Peronism during Juan Domingo's exile and, in 1970 in Madrid, was allowed extensive interviews with the caudillo-in-waiting. In sum, Martínez's life, like that of most of this fellow Argentines, inevitably included an

unending dialogue with Perón and Peronism.” (*Tomás Eloy Martínez* 333) In 1996 Martínez published Las memorias del general. This book included interviews that he had with Juan Domingo Perón in 1970. (Shumway *Tomás Eloy Martínez* 334) El sueño argentino, a collection of essays, was published in 1999 and it focuses on the people of Argentina and their history.

Mario Vargas Llosa (b. Arequipa, Perú, 1936) one of the best known writers in Latin America and Europe, started his literary career in 1952 with his play “La huída del inca” in Piura, Perú. (Castro-Klarén 1421) Like other Latin American writers, the Peruvian author traveled to Europe to enhance his career. He worked for a television network and was a local reporter for a variety of newspapers in Lima as well. In fact, he has continued to work as a reporter for newspapers and magazines in Latin America, the United States, and Europe. (Castro-Klarén 1422)

Sara Castro-Klarén believes that Vargas Llosa’s experience with the military and journalism are major sources for his novels. (1422) A clear example of this influence is La ciudad y los perros (1963), which gained international distinction. The Peruvian author also became associated with the boom of Latin American literature. Likewise, The Time of the Hero (1966), a translation of La ciudad y los perros was recognized as a prominent novel. This novel had numerous technical innovations: “...it is evident that The Time of the Hero constitutes the thematic as well as the rhetorical touchstone of Vargas Llosa’s narrative oeuvre. In his later novels he would repeat, change, enhance, add [...] aspects of the narrative structure of his first novel...” (Castro-Klarén 1423) He combines monologues, omniscient narration, memories, and dialogues. The narrative

includes the story of a violent society, a military academy and Jaguar's group. As in other novels, the theme of a corrupt system portrayed as just and fair is at the center of the narrative.

In 1966, La casa verde was published. The action of the novel takes place in Piura and it spans three generations and includes more than thirty-four characters. (Castro-Klarén 1424) Three institutions –the army, the family and the church – are the means by which the lives of the characters establish violent relations. (Castro-Klarén 1426) In contrast, Los cachorros (1967) is a return to the theme of growing up in a sexist society. In 1969, Vargas Llosa published Conversación en la Catedral and attempted to show the political and social mood during the years – 1948 to 1956- of the dictatorship of General Manuel Odría. As Castro-Klarén explains: “ Conversación en la Catedral takes place [...] during a four-hour conversation between Santiago Zavala and his father's former servant Ambrosio [...] This conversation will serve as the outer case for many other conversations between other characters in the novel.” (1427)

Vargas Llosa was also a prolific literary critic. In 1969, the prologue to the first modern Spanish edition of the Catalan chivalric novel Tirant lo blanc (first Spanish edition, 1511) gave him recognition. (Castro-Klarén 1428) Other critical works include: La orgía perpetua: Flaubert y “Madame Bovary” (1975), García Marquez: Historia de un deicidio (1971) and Entre Sartre y Camus (1981). The author: “regards the novel [...] as a genre that feeds on rotting flesh, that cannibalizes all objects and experiences that come to the novelist. He also believes that the challenge of the novel is to represent life in its

fullest sense.” (Castro-Klarén 1429) Since it draws attention to its own structure and theme.

In 1973, Vargas Llosa published a parodic novel titled Pantaleón y las visitadoras. This narrative includes humor, the theme of class differences, the military, the church and the jungle. The story is filled with dialogues, letters, radio news, and official military documents. During the same year, the Brazilian cinematographer Rui Guerra asked the author to adapt for the screen the historical account Os Sertoes (1902). However, the movie was not made. (Castro-Klarén 1431)

In 1977, with La tía Julia y el escribidor, Vargas Llosa constructs the story of a teenager Marito, who works as a newscaster in a radio station and marries his thirty-two-year-old aunt. This is a combination of autobiography and soap opera. With this novel, the writer entered the territory of the historical novel. Four years later, La Guerra del fin del mundo (1981) presented themes such as religious fanaticism, corruption in politics, yellow journalism and injustice.

On the other hand, Vargas Llosa has written plays such as “La señorita de Tacna” in 1981 and “Kathie y el hipopótamo” in 1983. In 1984, Historia de Mayta was published. This was a novel about an impossible revolution in Perú. In addition: “ This work is an almost essayistic inquiry into the relation between writing [...] and reality itself.” (Castro-Klarén 1433) Quién mató a Palomino Molero? (1986) is a novel that starts after a murder. The remaining of the story goes from the present to the past. In 2000, Vargas Llosa published La Fiesta del Chivo. His most recent novel El paraíso en la otra esquina was published in 2003. In 2004, La tentación de lo imposible was published.

The present study will focus on two New Historical Novels. Both of them present aspects of Postmodernism. As stated earlier, I intend to analyze Martínez's novel Santa Evita and Vargas Llosa's novel La Fiesta del Chivo. Both works deal with the topic of history and literature. The relationship between history and literature will be a main component of this project. Furthermore, both novels address two important figures in the history of Argentina and the Dominican Republic. By studying them, it will be possible to arrive at an understanding of their societies.

Chapter One will provide a discussion of the New Historical Latin American Novel and how Postmodernism serves as a background for this project. In order to do so, the writing and rewriting of history will be fundamental topics. It will be helpful to keep in mind that a unilateral vision of past events is no longer sufficient, because from a Postmodern perspective, multiple points of view enhance our understanding of the events. At the same time, Foucault's ideas about power and the power of knowledge will be an important part of the discussion of this chapter. The power of knowledge will introduce the idea of history and how it is recorded, since power reaches every individual and therefore influences the means by which one acquires knowledge. I will also consider the dynamic quality of history. In other words, history is constantly recreated. Finally, I will center my attention on literature and history and their points of intersection.

Chapter Two will focus on Postmodern art and it will be necessary to provide a description of the main traits of Postmodernism and Modernism. The differences between Modernism and Postmodernism have often been at the center of debates among scholars. Andreas Huyssen, Linda Hutcheon, Douwe Fokkema are some of the critics that

contribute to such discussion. Tomás Eloy Martínez's novel Santa Evita will illustrate a variety of postmodern characteristics: fragmentation of time, intertextuality, testimonies, and the intersection of models. Since the artist revises and questions conventional and dogmatic structures, then parody and myth will introduce the topic of revising representations about the past. Examples of parody and myth will show how Martínez constructs his narrative. The author comments on the ways in which past representations reflect present interests. Several points about the evolution of the Historical Novel and the Historical Novel in Latin America will follow. The Historical Novel in Latin America, for instance, concentrates on the presence of several identities. Fiction and history therefore will open the discussion of the importance of the documents in Martínez's novel. On the other hand, an explanation of simulacra and simulation will shed light on the different ways in which Eva Perón created herself and the ways in which others recreated her.

Chapter Three will provide an analysis of Mario Vargas Llosa's novel La Fiesta del Chivo. Since this novel is about a dictatorship, then an overview of dictatorships in Latin America will start the chapter. I will approach this novel from the perspective of the postmodern text. The way in which reality and fiction come together will introduce the topic of metafiction. A detailed explanation of how myth is presented in literature and history and how it is a fundamental piece of Vargas Llosa's novel will follow. Several myths observed throughout the history of the Dominican Republic tell us something about its people. Finally, this chapter will offer an overview of Bakhtin's perspectives about the novel as genre. According to Bakhtin, the novel as genre is constantly revising

itself. It will become clear that the novel presents examples of chronotopes and the grotesque. Chronotopes reveal how time and space relate in the narrative. On the other hand, the grotesque helps us understand how mythological figures become devalued.

The method of this study will be a close reading of Martínez's and Vargas Llosa's novels. I will scrutinize the structure, the topics and the symbols used in both works. I will also consider how history is portrayed and how literature plays an important role in the recording of history. Different points of view in relation to literary criticism will be helpful to complete this project.

CHAPTER ONE

RECONSIDERING THE PAST

This study provides a discussion about the New Historical Latin American Novel. In order to do so, it is essential to begin with a brief explanation of the writing and rewriting of history. Depending on the point of view, the reasons to write or rewrite history will vary. However, in this project, I will analyze a few of them, according to the themes and the structures of the novels examined. From this perspective, there are several reasons to write or rewrite history. Through the historical writing process, the reader achieves a more complete understanding of the present and a more thorough appreciation of the writing process. I intend to arrive to the point of understanding how the authors present memory in their narratives.

Meanwhile, it is important to take into account the voices recorded by historians, because they provide a more comprehensive perception of the past. A unilateral vision of the events is no longer sufficient since postmodernism favors multiple perspectives of events. On the other hand, memory also enables historians to reflect on the voices silenced in the past. They usually give light to characteristics of our own societies. Furthermore, there is always a historical meaning for such acknowledgement. While voices have a definite value in history, silence has its meaning as well. It is possible then to say that there is a meaning for such silence in the past. The meaning of silence teaches us about our present.

So far, the reasons to write and rewrite history have been briefly mentioned. However, before continuing, it is helpful to remember that there are differences between

the terms “writing” and “rewriting” history. Rewriting gives a sense of revision or reconsideration of a text or group of texts. This revision can be grounded in a structural, aesthetic or stylistic perspective. The interest of the writer or historian will dictate such approaches.

In contrast there are differences between two aspects of the historical process. The first one is the interpretation of history. In her book The Politics of Postmodernism, (1989), Linda Hutcheon explains: “ Postmodern fiction often thematizes this process of turning events into facts through the filtering and interpreting of archival documents” (57). In other words, postmodern fiction transforms past events into historical facts through the process of interpretation. The interpretation of history is the first step in the historical writing process. Historians are readers as well as interpreters of the past (Hutcheon, Politics 87). Therefore, historians are creators and artists. They can act as filters through which events are transformed. Undoubtedly, the power of historians comes from their ability and opportunity to tell the story of what happened.

Certainly, this project provides an analysis about the writing of history. Hutcheon contributes to the discussion of the past by claiming that the past cannot be avoided. The understanding of the present culture depends on how representations of the past are received and understood by the reader. Postmodernism is the stage where such assimilation takes place (Hutcheon, Politics 58). The understanding of the past becomes the first step to understand the present. Furthermore, according to Hutcheon, the meaning of the past is achieved through historiography (Hutcheon, Politics 64). Therefore, historiography enables the reader to understand the past.

At this point, it is helpful to mention that the layout of this chapter for the points of contact and contrast in two New Historical Novels is the following. A discussion of postmodernism will serve as a background for this study. Secondly, I will explain the relation between power and knowledge. I will also expand on the idea that history as dynamic and illustrate with several examples. An analysis of how literature and history intersect will follow.

This project focuses on Postmodernism as the background for new historical interpretations. A fundamental part of this study is the fact that our society lives in a postmodern period. According to Andreas Huyssen, in his study “Mapping the Postmodern”, postmodernism is not only a consequence of Modernism. Postmodernism discusses cultural tradition from the perspectives of the aesthetic and politics. Postmodernism places itself between tradition and the new, mass culture and high art, conservation and rebirth, to name a few. (Huyssen 145)

Since the term postmodernism may be misleading because of the existence of numerous points of view, it is essential to establish clear boundaries when using it. With this in mind, in regards to art, there are two important ideas about postmodern culture. Jameson illustrates one of them in his essay published as part of the The Anti-Aesthetic:

One of the most significant features or practices in postmodernism today is pastiche [...] Both pastiche and parody involve the imitation or better still, the mimicry of other styles [...] Now parody capitalizes on the uniqueness of these styles and seizes on their idiosyncrasies and eccentricities to produce an imitation which mocks the original [...] the general effect of parody is [...] to cast ridicule on the

private nature of these stylistic mannerisms and their excessiveness and eccentricity with respect to the way people normally speak or write (113).

By imitating other artistic styles or representations, the original work is seen from a different perspective and sometimes multiple ones. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that according to Jameson, “pastiche has replaced parody in postmodern culture. Parody requires something to parody in order to achieve its satirical effect [...] The intended effect of parody is critical comment [...] there is no object of criticism in pastiche” (McGuigan 71). On the other hand, postmodern culture gives artists the material to develop their creative endeavors. In relation to the above idea, Jameson adds:

There is another sense in which the writers and artists of the present day will no longer be able to invent new styles and worlds –they’ve already been invented; only a limited number of combinations are possible [...] Hence, once again, pastiche [...] all that is left is to imitate dead styles... (115).

That is, everything is a re-invented product. Moreover, history is constantly re-invented or re-told as well. In order to illustrate the mentioned ideas about postmodern culture, and more specifically literature and history, it is possible to recall that in the New Historical Latin American Novel, there are examples of history re-told. One of these examples is La fiesta del Chivo by Mario Vargas Llosa.

Within the parameters of postmodern fiction and historiography, it is necessary to take into account that postmodern culture, then, influences art. Scholars have contributed extensively to such idea. Art is directly influenced by postmodern culture. Crimp, in his essay published in The Anti-Aesthetic, joins the discussion about art:

Through reproductive technology postmodernist art dispense with the aura. The fiction of the creating subject gives way to the frank confiscation, quotation, excerptation, accumulation and repetition of already existing images. Notions of originality, authenticity and presence, essential to the ordered discourse of the museum, are undermined (53).

Repetition has taken the place of the original or the work of art. This idea can lead us to claim that art and history are constantly recreated. Furthermore, the reality of the museum can be extrapolated to broader levels such as literature.

Putting into perspective postmodernism and art, is important to understand how history becomes part of our present society. About this point, Crimp elaborates: “I believe that the emergence of postmodernism is closely related to the emergence of this new moment of late, consumer or multinational capitalism [...] our entire contemporary social system has little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its own past” (125). The idea of consumption is a reality that has influenced the public’s historical amnesia. Thus, Postmodernism is related to this historical amnesia.

In fact, the media is an example of society’s historical amnesia. Crimp continues to explain: “One is tempted to say that the very function of the news media is to relegate such recent historical experiences as rapidly as possible into the past. The informational function of the media would thus be to help us forget, to serve as the very agents and mechanisms for our historical amnesia”(125). The role of the media is to show us the present immediately, putting aside past events.

All of these points lead us to draw conclusions about the role of representation. Certainly, representation is significant when discussing historical amnesia. Nestor García Canclini, in his book Hybrid Cultures (1989), discusses symbols as types of representations:

The philosophical foundation of traditionalism is summarized in the certainty that there is an ontological correspondence between reality and representation, between society and the collections of symbols that represent it [...] Hence its principal dramatic performance is the mass commemoration: civic and religious celebrations, patriotic anniversaries, and, in dictatorial societies, especially restorations. The historical patrimony that is celebrated consists of founding events, the heroes who played the main roles in them, and the fetishized objects that evoke them. The legitimate rites are those that stage the desire for repetition and perpetuation of order (110).

These representations sometimes become public commemorations that have dramatic qualities. Subsequently, art or artistic representations are reflections of identities that can be seen throughout history.

Having entered the realms of representation, it is essential to examine the term “parody”. Hutcheon illustrates the concept of parody:

...through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference. [...] Parody also contests our humanist

assumptions about artistic originality and uniqueness and our capitalist notions of ownership and property (Politics 93).

Parody makes it possible for past representations to continue in the present. As a result, it could be implied that art is seen as continuous and its authenticity is questioned. Thus parody is a tool for understanding the past. Therefore, parody can be understood as a kind of mirror. Hutcheon clarifies: “Parody can be used as a self-reflexive technique that points to art as art, but also to art as inescapably bound to its aesthetic and even social past” (Politics 101). The understanding of art may be achieved through parody. Parody leads us to art’s relationship with society and its past. It is important to bear in mind that to understand society’s past is to understand culture as well. The self-reflexive function of parody can be utilized to understand history.

I should stress at this point that if parody is a signal of the past in the present and it can be seen as a mirror, then self-reflection takes us to the idea of self-consciousness. Hutcheon comments on this matter: “Its ironic reprise also offers an internalized sign of a certain self-consciousness about our culture’s means of ideological legitimation” (Politics 101). For this reason, this self-conscious activity is reflected in history. Throughout this project, it will be helpful to note that the legitimization of history is reflected in society.

Fundamental to this discussion is the fact that historical legitimization depends on power or who has that power. The idea of power and knowledge takes us to the field of the power of knowledge. In fact, there are reasons to analyze power and knowledge in a parallel manner. In the first place, throughout history, those with power have dictated the type of knowledge that individuals will acquire and use. In contrast, political reasons

have often triggered relationships like those between power and knowledge. Clearly, artists have used knowledge in order to create their particular representations of reality, often to ridicule established centers of power.

Michael Foucault's perspective of power and knowledge is essential to a discussion about history and literature. In Power-Knowledge- Selected interviews and other writings (1972-1977), Michael Foucault explains that power extends itself and reaches every individual. Power enters the lives of every person. For this reason, power influences everybody. Therefore, attitudes and actions are molded by power (39). For instance, in the case of dictatorships, specifically Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina's government in the Dominican Republic, those in power decide the lives of those who are not in power. Political, economical and academic institutions have an effect on every member of the community. Since power influences actions and attitudes, then power is directly related to knowledge and the means of achieving such knowledge. Moreover, Foucault adds:

Mechanisms of power in general have never been much studied by history. History has studied those who held power through anecdotal histories of kings and generals; contrasted with this there has been the history of economic processes and infrastructures[...] what has been studied even less is the relation between power and knowledge, the articulation of each other. It has been a tradition for humanism to assume that once someone gains power he ceases to know. Power makes men mad, and those who govern are blind; only those who keep their distance from power [...] only they can discover truth (Power-Knowledge 39).

Historians have focused their attention on the ones who have held power. On the other hand, the relationship between knowledge and power has been overlooked. Hence, the articulation of power and knowledge is directly related to history.

It should not go without saying that it is necessary to analyze power objectively. Foucault expands on the idea of power by implying that power causes the appearance of new sectors of knowledge. In other words, the exercise of power is a trigger force of knowledge (Power-Knowledge 51). Certainly, the exercise of power is reflected in history. Conflict becomes then a result of the exercise of power. Foucault continues: "...only the historical contents allow us to rediscover the ruptural effects of conflict and struggle that the order imposed by functionalist or systematizing thought is designed to mask" (Power-Knowledge 82). By means of examining history and its structure one can understand the systems of power and their influence or ramifications. The systems of power in our culture are directly related to history. For example, an examination of Trujillo's years in power and his paternal behavior towards the Dominican population is essential for understanding his successor, Joaquín Balaguer and his presidency. Many of the patterns found during Trujillo's government were continued during Balaguer's years.

Within the parameters of power and knowledge, so far I have dealt with some mechanisms of power and the conflict resulting from the exercise of power. It is also relevant to mention the existence of subjugated knowledges. By subjugated knowledges, I mean those knowledges that have been dominated or ignored, such as the testimonies of those who were not in power. Foucault explains that subjugated knowledges are those pieces of historical knowledge that existed, however, they were hidden from the accepted

and documented historical body. Yet, theory and critical research have discovered these historical pieces of the puzzle (Foucault, Power-Knowledge 82). The study of subjugated historical knowledge can be conceived as the history not told. It is significant to take into account that knowledge can be present in a disguised form. For instance, subjugated knowledge during a dictatorship is a common case. It exists, however it cannot be made public because it is considered threatening for political reasons.

As a result, history has shown that there is always a need to emancipate such knowledge (Foucault, Power-Knowledge 85). Power is related to the emancipation of historical knowledge, because those in power control and manipulate knowledge. For instance, the books that are accepted by the government during a dictatorship do not threaten the established order. Foucault on the other hand opens the discussion of the operations of power:

...what are these various contrivances of power, whose operations extend to such differing levels and sectors of society and are possessed of such manifold ramifications? [...] This economic functionality is present to the extent that power is conceived primarily in terms of the role it plays in the maintenance simultaneously of the relations of production and of a class domination which the development and specific forms of the forces of production have rendered possible (Power-Knowledge 88-89).

Since operations of power can be found in different sectors of society, then production and social class organization will dictate where power will be found. Throughout history, one is able to see the ramifications of power in different societies. Subsequently, the

understanding of the role of power and history in society is key to a study about the historical novel. For instance, the novel about dictatorships, which will be addressed in more detail in chapter three sheds light upon the topic of the role of power in society.

Significantly, there is a relationship between power, individuals and economic systems in society. Foucault elaborates on the notions of power and the economy:

On this view, then, the historical *raison d'être* of political power is to be found in the economy. Broadly speaking, in the first case we have a political power whose formal model is discoverable in the process of exchange, the economic circulation of commodities; in the second case, the historical *raison d'être* of political power and the principle of its concrete forms and actual functioning, is located in the economy (Power-Knowledge 89).

The sectors of society that have power are the ones that also have economic power. Nevertheless, according to Foucault, power is not given or recuperated. Power is found in people's actions (Power-Knowledge 89). In contrast, society is a window through which one can see power.

It is necessary to point out that power is found above economy. Foucault continues: Again, we have at our disposal another assertion to the effect that power is not primarily the maintenance and reproduction of economic relations, but is above all a relation of force. The questions to be posed would be these: if power is exercised, what sort of exercise does it involve? In what does it consist? What is its mechanism? There is an immediate answer that many contemporary analyses

would appear to offer: power is essentially that which represses. Power represses nature, the instincts, a class, individuals (Power-Knowledge 89).

According to Foucault, power tells us what to do and what not to do. Therefore, it is important to understand how power works, what moves it and how it is used. Thus, if power represses individuals, then power influences history as well. On the other hand, there is an effect of such repression on the idea of truth and the ownership of truth, because the repressive power will dictate who owns the truth in history. Foucault concentrates on truth: “We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (Power-Knowledge 93). History is sometimes, and not without a risk, perceived as a reflection of truth. In the past the concept of a unilateral truth carried considerable importance.

Today, truth is seen as a complex and significant concept, which at the same time, has multiple aspects. In fact the concept of truth can be tied to power. Foucault focuses on the ramifications of power:

What is needed is a study of power in its external visage, at the point where it is in direct and immediate relationship with that which we can provisionally call its object, its target, its field of application, there –that is to say- where it installs itself and produces its real effects (Power-Knowledge 97).

Studying the external ramifications of power is important in the process of understanding power. The effect of power is related to knowledge. Foucault continues by stating that power moves and is not localized in any specific place. Power is not a commodity. Foucault uses the metaphor of a chain or a net to describe power. In contrast, individuals

are vehicles of power (Power-Knowledge 98). Fundamental to this project is the notion that individuals, especially historians are vehicles of power.

At this point, it is necessary to expand on the connection between power and knowledge. In Foucault's view:

It is the production of effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge –methods of observation, techniques of registration, procedures for investigation and research, apparatuses of control. All this means that power, when it is exercised through these subtle mechanisms, cannot but evolve, organize and put into circulation a knowledge, or rather apparatuses of knowledge, which are not ideological constructs (Power-Knowledge 102).

As a result, the accumulation of knowledge is reflected in history. In addition, Foucault determines that an analysis of power should be approached from the perspective of the mechanisms of domination. Hence power is studied through the techniques of domination. (Power-Knowledge 102) The techniques of domination are related directly to knowledge. For instance, methods of study or registration of specific events gather knowledge. Such is the case of the abuses committed by Trujillo's dictatorship, which were not recorded by the official history. These techniques of selecting what will be recorded by history are a clear example of the relationship between power and knowledge.

Now that we have entered the topic of knowledge, discourse will be a key element in the following discussion. Foucault believes that discourse is a production of power (Power-Knowledge 119). Discourse is related directly to knowledge, because through

discourse knowledge is expanded. In this project, discourse is understood as written or oral language. For example, a dialogue and a written document, fall in the category of discourse. As a matter of fact, according to Foucault:

Power is what says no. And the challenging of power as thus conceived can appear only as transgression. It allows the fundamental operation of power to be thought of as that of a speech-act: enunciation of law, discourse of prohibition. The manifestation of power takes on the pure form of 'Thou shalt not' (Power-Knowledge 139).

In other words, power, according to Foucault, is a discourse of prohibition. Accordingly, this discourse of prohibition is reflected in history, because history is a mirror, often a distorted mirror, of what is told and what is left untold. An example of discourse of prohibition is the government's discourse in La fiesta del Chivo. During Trujillo's regime, foreign newspapers or magazines were prohibited to enter the country because they were seen as a threat to the government's ideas. Discourse is an evolving and changing element in history. An example of this evolution of discourse is the unveiled story narrated in La fiesta del Chivo.

As a brief summary, this chapter, so far, has focused on discussions such as the writing and rewriting of history, postmodernism and the relationship between power and knowledge. Now I will direct my attention towards history once again. History can be studied as a source of traces of the past. With this in mind, some examples of traces of the past are letters, speeches and official government records. The representations of these traces are the documents, the books written based on these documents, among others.

Such representations act as filters or windows through which one interprets such traces. Hutcheon elaborates on the past: “The past really did exist, but we can only know it today through its textual traces, its often complex and indirect representations in the present: documents, archives, but also photographs, paintings, architecture, films, and literature” (The Politics of Postmodernism 78). That is, the traces of the past are observed in the present.

Conversely, literature and history find each other at a point of intersection. Diana Salem in her article “Historia, memoria y testimonio. Reflexiones sobre la obra de Tomás Eloy Martínez”, states that:

La interrelación entre discurso histórico y ficción literaria presenta aquí un doble juego: por un lado el escritor debe reinventar una realidad casi inmediata para que sea accesible a los códigos de la escritura; por el otro, a falta de datos precisos debe, en algunos casos, re-escribir la historia en una operación tramposa. Hay detrás, pero no muy lejos, un macro-texto histórico previo: fotos, grabaciones, noticieros, documentos y una memoria popular evaluando, a la luz del tiempo, los resultados obtenidos. (348)

It is of significance to focus on a meeting point of literature and history in order to understand how both of them behave together. Linda Hutcheon explains her views on historiographic metafiction. First it is essential to clarify that historiography studies the mechanisms and the influence of history. Whereas metafiction is the idea of fiction included yet in a broader fictional work. In other words, narratives can be found inside other narratives, creating an intricate web of stories. Hutcheon expands on her definition

of historiographic metafiction. The critic believes that: “Historiographic metafiction is written today in the context of a serious contemporary interrogating of the nature of representation in historiography” (Politics 50). Today, there is a question about representation in historiography. For the purposes of this project, representation in historiography will be related to the New Historical Novel.

There are numerous examples in literature of historiographic metafiction. Hutcheon elaborates: “Given that narrative has become problematic in historiography as well as fiction, what is interesting is that the same issues arise: narrative representation as a mode of knowledge and explanation, as unavoidably ideological, as a localizable code” (The Politics of Postmodernism 54). Hence, narrative becomes problematic in historiography. Therefore, in the realms of historiographic metafiction, narrative and history are key. Before continuing, it is necessary to indicate that within the area of historiographic metafiction, paratexts play an important role. A paratext is a text within another text. There is a difference between a text and a paratext. A paratext can be part of a system of several other texts. An example of such difference is the intricate web of documents found within the narrative of Santa Evita, by Tomás Eloy Martínez. These types of examples will be examined in later chapters of this dissertation.

On the other hand, paratexts are key in literature and history because they tell us about the structure and the processes of interpreting and writing. Hutcheon continues: “History- writing’s paratexts (especially footnotes and the textual incorporation of written documents) are conventions which historiographic metafiction both uses and abuses”

(Politics 83). As a matter of fact, paratexts usually provide us with leads and pieces of information that the main body of a text does not include.

Accordingly, paratextuality is the study of paratexts. Hutcheon explains the function of paratextuality:

A second function of paratextuality, then, would be primarily a discursive one. The reader's linear reading is disrupted by the presence of a lower text on the same page, and this hermeneutic disruption calls attention to the footnote's own very doubled or dialogic form. In historical discourse, we know that footnotes are often the space where opposing views are dealt with (and textually marginalized), but we also know that they can offer a supplement to the upper text or can often provide an authority to support it (Politics 84).

In any event, paratextuality is characterized by its discursive function. Indeed, the study of discourse in history is essential.

Much of what has been presented in this chapter, so far, is related to the meeting point of literature and history. Beyond that, it is important to keep in mind that rethinking literary history is a phrase that proposes to analyze the history of literature from a different perspective or perspectives. On the other hand, it is essential to rethink literary history in order to achieve a more complete understanding of the present.

Linda Hutcheon's views on literary history are numerous; the following are only a few that will be helpful in this project in particular. Hutcheon explains:

Rethinking Literary History sets out to participate not only in a continuing dialogue with the illustrious shades of the past, encountered and engaged while writing

literary history, but also in a continuing dialogue among colleagues in the present working together to rethink literary history at a time when new methodological paradigms have offered new problematizing challenges (9).

In essence, there is a continuing dialogue with the past through Rethinking Literary Theory. Literary history in our postmodern society has evolved significantly. The conception of literary history has changed, an example is historical novels. Hutcheon expands on the process of literary history:

A postmodern literary history can be neither the cumulative record of everything that has been written nor the compilation of themes and topics that have been emphasized by past historians. Literary history can only be effective in our postmodern world if it is an ongoing search for understanding of our sense of the past which stands behind the texts we read in the present. There is no doubt that at any given point in history the knowledge of the past is partial and reflective of present perspectives (Rethinking 81).

However, it is essential to clarify that any study of the past will be limited. Consequently the knowledge of the past as partial is directly related to history. According to Hutcheon:

There is no question that the significance of past actions must first be understood in terms of their agents' own values and aesthetic perspectives and not in terms of our very different ones. But on the other hand, to ignore the meanings of our own redescriptions of the events would be to play the fool (Rethinking 81).

In other words, the author's perspectives and the reader's perspectives have equal value.

Meanwhile, there are tasks before readers and historians in order to analyze history and literature. Hutcheon maintains that:

There are three preliminary tasks before us: to understand how our narrative form cannot escape our own value spectrum, to abandon the notion of a universal history, and to open up for scrutiny the concept of event itself. The cognitive function of the historian's narrative form is not a neutral compilation of a succession of facts and ascribed purpose and design; it is, above all, the making of a whole out of a number of interrelationships that are not in themselves related by necessity but only by purpose of exposition. Narrative form is thus an artifice designed to represent a specific explanation for past activity (Rethinking 81).

In short, the absence of a universal history and the presence of narrative as an artifice have to be considered in a study about history and literature. Therefore, history is influenced by culture, narrative and aesthetic perspectives.

The relation between history as a narrative form, culture and aesthetic perspectives lead us to the idea that culture is directly related to art, keeping in mind, however that art is culture in part. In Latin American art, colonial painting is a clear example of how the reality of culture influences art. Therefore, art and even documents are aspects of history. Hutcheon states that:

My first point is that literary history not only attempts to realize a reenactment of a past event, it also presents a contemporary reflection of the writing as an aesthetic experience in the present. Literary history treats writing both as document and as experience (Rethinking 81).

Literary history looks at writing as a physical document and as an artistic process. Subsequently, reflection and representation are essential parts of the study of history and literature.

Reflection will guide us towards a process of demythologization of history. The demythologization of history in literature has been a constant point of interest among scholars. Roland Barthes defines myth in the following manner:

Myth is a system of communication, it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form. Later, we shall have to assign to this form historical limits, conditions of use, reintroduce society into it: we must nevertheless first describe it as a form (109).

That is, myth is a message. Rather than an object, myth is a discourse or language. For this reason, in order to study myth, it is important to keep in mind history, society and their influence on how individuals receive and interpret the past. On the other hand, myth is limited and influenced by history. Therefore, speech is limited by historical boundaries. Myth is a type of speech (Barthes 109). This type of speech is part of history. Barthes indicates:

Ancient or not, mythology can only have an historical foundation, for myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things. Speech of this kind is a message. It is therefore by no means confined to oral speech. It can consist of modes of writing or of representations; not only

written discourse, but also photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows, publicity, all these can serve as a support to mythical speech (110).

Myth is a kind of speech selected by history. Furthermore, it is not only written or oral. It can take place in numerous forms of representation, such as film, photography or literature. An example in literature is the role of the dictator in La fiesta del Chivo.

There is a considerable importance of myth when studying history. On this subject, Foucault adds:

Myth hides nothing and flaunts nothing: it distorts; myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflexion [...] We reach here the very principle of myth: it transforms history into nature [...] what causes mythical speech to be uttered is perfectly explicit, but it is immediately frozen into something natural; it is not read as a motive, but as a reason (Power-Knowledge 129).

Myth will reveal aspects of history that before were not explicit.

Therefore, to go back to literature, myth can be understood in the following manner. Barthes explains:

There is therefore one language which is not mythical, it is the language of man as a producer: wherever man speaks in order to transform reality and no longer to preserve it as an image, wherever he links his language to the making of things, metalanguage is referred to a language-object, and myth is impossible. This is why revolutionary language proper cannot be mythical (146).

Myth is never dynamic. I should emphasize that one can say that revolutionary language is an enemy of myth, since it changes myth. In addition, the term metalanguage can be

understood as a language included or embedded within another language. Consequently, literature can be seen as revolutionary language. For example, the novel about dictatorships shows the role of power in societies and its influence in specific individuals, the perspective, therefore will not be unilateral and will be subject to change.

So far, this study has introduced several historical, social and literary points of discussion. The last main point was the meeting point of literature and history. As a way of developing this idea, we have mentioned the importance of such intersection, Linda Hutcheon's historiographic metafiction, rethinking literary history, the understanding of the present and the demythologization of history in literature. Now we enter the discussion of the recovery of memory. The recovery of memory through the writing of literature is fundamental in a discussion about the New Historical Novel. There are several ways to approach the topic of memory. The following are helpful.

The understanding of memory in literature may be examined in the light of novels like Santa Evita and La fiesta del Chivo. Memory is rediscovered in Santa Evita. Moreover, Tomás Eloy Martínez uses methods in rediscovering memory, such as the organization of documents, followed by the notion of the preservation of the work of art. Finally, the artist's thinking process is a focal point in the novel. Such process takes the reader along the author's path in bringing together every part of the structure of the novel.

Furthermore, memory is a vehicle to understand the present in La Fiesta del Chivo. There are methods used by Mario Vargas Llosa to approach the topic of memory. First of all, the reader is a witness of one of the character's journey through time and space. The

character's desire to continue such journey in the future is the second method. Lastly, the multidimensional nature of time is significant.

Meanwhile, the understanding of memory in history is key to the analysis of any historical document. It is necessary to bear in mind that there is an absence of a reliable truth in history and literature. According to Foucault, we are faced with a regime of truth (Power-Knowledge 131,133). That is to say, this regime will decide what is considered truth and what is excluded from the truth. For this reason, there is a constant battle for truth (Foucault, Power-Knowledge 132). Moreover, the battle for the right to tell the truth in history is permanent. Foucault states that truth is a system of ordered procedures. (Power-Knowledge 133) Such procedures become a main part of history. At the same time, Foucault believes that it is essential to detach truth from hegemony (Power-Knowledge 133).

There is, nevertheless, one reality that cannot be forgotten, and that is the reality of a constant change in history and literature. The only reality in history is that change is constant. Moreover, literature is also in a constant change with history. In contrast, different voices or perspectives are recreations of history. As a matter of fact, the recreation of history is based on multiple voices. La fiesta del Chivo is an example of these voices. Hence, a unilateral point of view is an obstacle for any historical recreation. The dictatorship's ability to manipulate the facts or what is considered the truth in La fiesta del Chivo is an example of such obstacle.

Finally, it is possible to summarize the following points about history. The theoretical views covered in this chapter can be condensed in the following manner.

Foucault's ideas about power are a foundation to understand and analyze the power of historians to tell the story or stories. On the other hand, Barthes' views about myth help us comprehend that myth reveals aspects about the past and it is necessary to remember that when man speaks in order to transform reality, myth is not possible. Similarly, Hutcheon's perspectives about historiographic metafiction, are important in order to understand the points of intersection of history and literature.

Furthermore, the following conclusions about history can be drawn. History is involved in a constant change. Meanwhile, literature is in a constant change as well. For this reason, literature can be seen as a vehicle to understand history. In fact, memory is essential to understand the past. Thus, memory is crucial to understand the present. The present takes us to postmodernism. Additionally, postmodernism is the stage for the historical recreation process. Such process relies on the absence of a unilateral truth. Its multiple faces characterize the idea of truth; therefore, it cannot be limited to one perspective.

In conclusion, a few questions for future studies on history and literature can be posed. These questions can find a starting point in the following ideas. Postmodernism is revolutionary, because it provides a new way to write and read history. At the same time, it redefines the relationship between fiction and history. The following chapters of this project will develop these points further. The work of art is a vehicle to understand the present and historical works are paths to understand such present. Therefore, literary works are vehicles to understand the present. Meanwhile, learning from the

indecipherability of documents about the past will open the door for new ways of reading and writing.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROJECTION OF A STORY

In the previous chapter, I addressed several ideas about Postmodernism, including analyzing art as a way to understand the present. At the same time, I established that historical and literary works are vehicles to comprehend the present. Consequently, the process of artistic production is also a vehicle to understand the present. Another main point of chapter one was that the understanding of the indecipherability of documents about the past could open new doors for reading and writing history.

This chapter will examine, within these frames, Santa Evita (1995) by Tomás Eloy Martínez. The Argentinean novel will be approached from the perspective of Postmodern art. It is essential at this point to establish where Martínez's novel is placed. María del Carmen Tacconi de Gómez, in her study Identidad y Mito en las Novelas de Fausto Burgos y Tomás Eloy Martínez, published in 1996, explains: "Santa Evita (1995) se inscribe en la ya abundante producción sobre la figura de Eva Duarte de Perón, que ha dado textos de relevante valor estético como Esa Mujer, de Rodolfo Walsh y La Pasión según Eva de Abel Posse" (98). With this in mind, Tacconi de Gómez proceeds:

Puede reconocerse a Santa Evita como una manifestación de la nueva novela histórica hispanoamericana. En este sentido presenta rasgos identificatorios claros: ficcionaliza la vida de un personaje central en la actividad política argentina de un período determinado; el discurso otorga un lugar relevante a la reflexión metaficcional y concede una importancia notoria a las relaciones intertextuales- sobre todo en cuanto a relatos que han tenido la misma protagonista-; plantea el

problema de la verdad histórica. Importa destacar en este caso que la proximidad de los hechos históricos reconstruidos permite la incorporación de múltiples testimonios, lo cual amplía el espectro de las fuentes documentales. (128)

Thus, Santa Evita can be considered a new historical novel. In this sense, it fictionalizes the life of a woman who was in the center of the political life of Argentina. On the other hand, its discourse focuses on a metafictional reflection. In addition, such discourse is formed by intertextual relations. Last but not least, it deals with the problem of the historical truth. We are brought closer, as readers, to the reconstructed historical events. In fact the author includes a variety of testimonies. These testimonies will open the topic of the documents. Furthermore, Tacconi de Gómez emphasizes that: “Santa Evita se agrega a una línea de la narrativa argentina de la segunda mitad de este siglo [...] En esta línea, entran la reconstrucción histórica, el rescate de testimonios y la ficcionalización para generar productos que ponen en cuestión una vez más, el problema de la verdad histórica” (144). That is, Martínez’s novel is part of an Argentinean narrative that brings to light the historical reconstruction, the rescue of testimonies and fictionalization. Meanwhile, Santa Evita addresses the problem of the existence of a historical truth.

This chapter will focus on the question: Where is Santa Evita placed?; additionally, it will examine parody and myth within the context of Martínez’s novel. First of all, it is necessary to consider the topic of the historical novel. Daniel Balderston, in his study The Historical Novel in Latin America (1986), states that: “The historical novel, created in Scotland by Sir Walter Scott in the early years of the Nineteenth century, enjoyed a great vogue throughout Europe in the rest of the century, associated as it is with such names as

Tolstoy, Manzoni, Stendhal, Flaubert and Galdós” (9). In other words, the historical novel created by Scott in the nineteenth century was very popular throughout Europe. In particular, in Latin America, the first novels were historical or romantic since they followed the tradition of Scott in Europe. Their authors were concerned with the construction of a historical past. (9)

Moreover, the early historical novel in Latin America is related to what we know today as the new historical novel. Balderston establishes that:

In our century the historical novel has suffered numerous ups and downs in importance. The modernist novel *La gloria de don Ramiro* is the ultimate in what Amado Alonso calls an “archeological” approach to historical fiction, viewed so negatively by Lukács in his writing on Flaubert [...] Instead, the novelists of the Mexican Revolution, with their search for immediacy and earthy realism, have provided readers and writers with a more dynamic model for the representation of historical conflict in fiction. The historical novel enjoyed a new vogue in the middle of our century, as a counterpoint to, indeed often as an element of, the social realist novels. Graciliano Ramos’s great *Sao Bernardo* is a profound analysis of the relations between an individual story of ambition and betrayal and the larger story of Brazil’s thwarted revolution of 1930. Jorge Amado and Erico Veríssimo, also in Brazil, wrote vast fictional chronicles of regional and national history. (10)

Thus, the historical novel has gone through several periods of increase and decrease in popularity. Such periods are related to the development of the New Historical Novel. The New Historical Novel in Latin America has changed drastically from its first models. It is

important to note that the topics of many historical novels have to do with independence, revolts and national organizations, among others. Such is the case of Yo el Supremo. (Balderston 12) As this chapter will show the mentioned topics are also related to Santa Evita.

Conversely, the Historical Novel in Latin America can also be approached from a different perspective. Noé Jitrik, in his study “De la historia a la escritura: predominios disimetrías, acuerdo en la novela histórica latinoamericana” (1986), claims: “...podría decirse que la “novela histórica” es también una manera de leer; la nuestra, por ejemplo, tiende a convertir textos y ver en ellos no solamente lo que ellos “dicen” sino también lo que por debajo de lo que dicen entabla discursos múltiples con lo real” (26). The historical novel is a way of reading or discovering what lies underneath the written word. On the other hand, Tomás Eloy Martínez, in his article “Mito, Historia y Ficción en América Latina” (1999), explains:

Pero en la América Latina de las dictaduras, la novela me ha parecido siempre un medio más certero para acercarse a la realidad que las otras formas de la escritura. Primero, porque la realidad es ya de por sí novelesca. Y luego, porque la complejidad de esa realidad novelesca exige que la nación sea narrada con instrumentos más flexibles y, por supuesto, más complejos. (7)

Certainly, in Latin American countries, where dictatorships have taken place, the novel has been a resourceful way of approaching past events. The complexity of these nations’ political realities requires the novel’s flexible nature in order to tell the story or stories of what happened. In this chapter, Santa Evita will be analyzed in this light.

Tomás Eloy Martínez talks about his novel, in “Mito, Historia y Ficción en América Latina”:

Permítanme citar el ejemplo de mi novela Santa Evita. Lo que hice allí es tejer un relato posible, una ficción, sobre un bastidor en el que hay hechos y personajes reales, algunos de los cuales están vivos. Si el texto da la impresión de un reportaje, es porque invertí deliberadamente la estrategia del llamado “nuevo periodismo” de los años 60 [...] En Santa Evita, el procedimiento narrativo es exactamente el inverso: se cuentan hechos ficticios como si fueran reales, empleando algunas técnicas del periodismo [...] El texto trata de establecer con el lector un pacto semejante al que uno establece con una película: la realidad se recorta, desaparece, y el espectador se sumerge en otra realidad que sólo desaparece cuando la película termina. (7)

Therefore, reality is transformed. In fact, novels about history in the 1960s and 1970s showed an interest in substituting the official history with fictional events. Diana Salem argues that: “La producción literaria parece fundarse en la búsqueda de un discurso con referentes cercanos, como podrían serlo personajes de nuestro pasado reciente y enfatiza la necesidad de comprender a partir de estas peculiares ficcionalizaciones, nuestra historia.” (347) An example of this recent past is former president Joaquín Balaguer’s government in the Dominican Republic. Many of the patterns seen during Trujillo’s Era continue during the years after his death. Chapter three will focus on this topic. Salem continues:

Esta literatura que utiliza el testimonio como punto de partida para la construcción del discurso ficcional, reflexiona en el presente por las vibraciones de hechos pasados que tienen como protagonistas a personajes reales, cuya particularidad consiste en haber modificado el transcurrir histórico, o en haber invertido en hechos históricamente singulares.

Tal es el caso de Tomás Eloy Martínez, quien en sus dos últimas novelas: *Santa Evita* y *La novela de Perón*, utiliza estos dos personajes pertenecientes a un pasado cercano y que formara parte de los fantasmas que a menudo asedian a los argentinos. (347)

Consequently, the truth no longer belongs to those in power. (Martínez, Mito, Historia y Ficción en América Latina 8) For instance, novels like Santa Evita, examine Argentina's historical past. In Las memorias del general (1996), Martínez writes about the idea of *truth* in Argentina:

Cada uno de los datos de este libro tiene un documento, una carta, una cinta grabada que avala su veracidad. En los inciertos años en que estas páginas fueron escritas, la ilusión de verdad era todo lo que los argentinos podíamos llevar de un lado a otro y tal vez lo único de lo que no fuimos despojados. (15)

Therefore, the author creates his narrative over texts and documents that may give the impression of veracity. Consequently, his point of view will not be limited to the official history.

Thus far, I have described several characteristics of the Historical Novel and the Historical Novel in Latin America. Santa Evita has been placed within a frame of novels

that present reality in a new light. For this reason, it could be said that the act of writing has taken a new direction as well. Martínez explains:

Escribir no es ya oponerse a los absolutos, porque no quedan en pie los absolutos. Nadie cree ahora que el poder es un bastión homogéneo; nadie puede tampoco redescubrir que el poder construye su verdad valiéndose, como observó Foucault, de una red de producciones, discriminaciones, censuras y prohibiciones. Lo que ha sobrevenido es el vacío: un vacío que comienza a ser llenado no ya por una versión que se opone a la oficial, sino por muchas versiones o, más bien, por una versión que va cambiando de color según quién mira [...] la mirada se mueve de lugar. (Mito 8)

Writers like Martínez tell the stories about Argentine history for several reasons. For example, they do not want to be part of an official history, they do not want political power to censor their work and they attempt to solve present problems in their countries. The empty space that Martínez refers to is filled by not only one interpretation of history, but also by several points of view. Furthermore, these interpretations change according to who approaches them, who produces them and who studies them. According to Nicolas Shumway, in his article “Tomás Eloy Martínez”, Santa Evita and La novela de Perón share a subject: history. Martínez focuses often in the connection between historical and fictional works. (337) This is a key issue in the handling of documents in the story line in Santa Evita. Additionally, it is not possible anymore to establish a dialogue with a history that is considered a reliable truth. Today the dialogue has to take place with history as culture. (Martínez, Mito 9) This is one of the main points that Martínez proposes in his

novel. Moreover, one has to lean towards a reconstruction. (Martínez, Mito 9) This reconstruction is part of the structure and the theme of Santa Evita.

It is important at this point to focus on particular differences between the Historical Novel and the Historical Novel in Latin America. According to Noé Jitrik:

...la novela histórica que empezó a concebirse y a realizarse en América Latina [...] es de búsqueda, como la europea, pero no de una identidad social y clasista sino nacional, de legitimidad: se quiere [...] saber no de dónde se procede sino qué se es frente a otras identidades, siendo la identidad propia problemática, indecisa [...] ligado este problema al de la independencia política, siendo el ser criollo algo poco definido, se tiende una censura casi generalizada, por un lado sobre lo indígena o sea, sobre una gran parte del pasado, debiendo rechazarse por el otro lo colonial que es aquello contra lo cual surge lo nacional “in progress.” El segundo rasgo [...] reside en la percepción historiográfica misma, que es bastante débil, porque la historia está empezando apenas a construirse... (16)

One of the main interests in the Latin American Historical Novel is the presence of numerous identities.

The influence of the Historical Novel was quite different in Europe and in Latin America. Jitrik points out a few details:

Mucho se podría decir sobre la “función” de la novela histórica en relación con el proceso de estructuración nacional, institucional, social y cultural de nuestros países durante el siglo XIX; todo eso ha sido dicho, incluso que, aunque las novelas llamadas históricas tengan un carácter crítico respecto del curso de tal proceso,

expresan el proceso [...] El alcance de su búsqueda, por lo tanto, siendo tal, se diferencia del que caracteriza a la novela histórica europea del mismo modo que son diferentes los respectivos conceptos de nacionalismo y, por cierto, los conflictos de clase, aunque los instrumentos conceptuales con los que nos acercamos a ellos sean similares o precedan de comunes paradigmas. (18)

The concepts of nationalism and class struggle are different in Europe and in Latin America, however the tools to study them are often times similar. These concepts of the Historical Novel are related to characteristics of the New Historical Novel. For instance, the historical novels are a result of a combination of the information found in documents and the interpretation of such information. These ideas date back to Hegel's philosophy (Jitrik 22). According to Hegel, historians bring to their writing previous categories and their perspectives about reading and writing history. Significantly, a historical novel may become independent from a particular document and can take a new direction (Jitrik 23). This new direction will take us closer to an understanding of the New Historical Novel.

Conversely, it is essential to keep in mind that the historical novel has changed, although it is still considered interesting and of great value (Jitrik 27). One of the many changes that have taken place is the conception of truth. Jitrik affirms that:

En cuanto a la verosimilitud ya se iba viendo que no sólo era difícil respetarla sino también que lo más interesante aun creyendo respetarla, era transgredir sus reglas; es más, tentativas de ruptura absoluta como las de Macedonio Fernández abren el camino para una construcción opuesta, la inverosimilitud [...] en cuanto a la linealidad, la denuncia de su carácter convencional, que descansa a su vez en una

idea de temporalidad continua, permite articular una respuesta racional a su desgastada coherencia por medio del fragmentarismo que abre, así una gran y extensa posibilidad (27).

Actually, the idea of “the truth” is not the most interesting part of the text. For example, fragments and pieces of different stories substitute an organized chronological structure. These characteristics are present in Santa Evita, since the novel gives the idea of a fragmented universe of story lines.

As a matter of fact, Martinez’s novel begins with Eva’s death:

El presidente parecía harto de todas esas alucinaciones [...] -Desaparézcala –dijo-. Acábela. Conviértala en una muerta como cualquier otra. [...] Aunque los cuerpos que mueren dejan su destino muy atrás, el de la mujer aún estaba incompleto. (Martínez, Santa Evita 25)

Marta Morello-Frosch in her study “La ficción de la historia en la narrativa argentina reciente” (1986) explains this new way of putting together pieces of the past. The scholar notes that to narrate history is a way to organize readings about the past. This type of writing is located between an official and a fictionalized version of a nation’s past. This writing creates new spaces of discourse (Morello-Frosch 201). Santa Evita shows such new spaces of discourse.

Continuing with this idea, more specifically in Argentina, historical discourse took a new direction. Morello-Frosch expands on the subject:

Debemos considerar que en la Argentina existieron varias ficciones de la historia, y que la más difundida durante la década de los años setenta, fue la versión oficial de

la misma, hecha parte del programa de la reconstrucción del país según el proceso que acabó en 1983, pero practicada en otras formas desde el proyecto nacional post independentista [...] el discurso oficial proyectaba modelos míticos de un pasado exhumado sin conflictos, sin lucha de clases ni intereses en pugna. Dicho pasado, olvidado, según la autoridad, a costa de una cadena de errores históricos causante de un cuerpo social enfermo, daría la pauta, el modelo a seguir para recobrar la salud nacional perdida. (202)

In Argentina, the official history during the 1970s presented a past without conflicts. Nevertheless, the past became the model for a new discourse. Santa Evita is an example of this development. Moreover, such version of the story is fragmentary; it shows a variety of narrators and points of view. Nicolas Shumway, when addressing La novela de Perón, states that: “Martínez pushes this idea even further by suggesting that all Argentines in some sense create their own novel of Perón, their own way of understanding how their lives interact with this figure of mythological dimensions.” (338). In fact, in the first pages of La novela de Perón the idea of creating new versions of history is clear:

Ir levantando poco a poco los velos de Perón había sido excitante por momento [...] Pero el director de la revista [...] le dijo. ¿No ha leído lo que han hecho los otros?...Mire aquello, Zamora: las fotos mayúsculas del exilio, año por año. ¿Y nosotros vamos a competir con esta magra historia?: ¿sin nada más? [...] Tal vez con aviso a toda página en “La Nación” y “Clarín” [...] el General como nadie lo ha visto, la verdad al desnudo... (Martínez 46)

Furthermore, in Santa Evita, there is no moral lesson in the end; on the contrary, it is about personal testimonies. In this way, narrators want to tell the history of a social experience that has been put aside by the official version of history. (Morello-Frosch 203)

This process is reflected throughout Santa Evita. In fact, Martínez explains:

En una larga y descartada versión de esta misma novela conté la historia de los hombres que habían condenado a Evita a una errancia sin término. Escribí algunas escenas aterradoras [...] Vi al embalsamador escudriñando con desesperación los rincones de su propio pasado en busca de un momento que coincidiera con el pasado de Evita. (Santa Evita 63)

To write and to reflect on what is written has always created tension in Latin America. Sometimes, reality is portrayed as myth. However, unlike myth reality is never static. (Martínez, Mito 11)

In order to continue, it is necessary to discuss Postmodernism in more depth. To achieve this goal, it is helpful to mention the conventions of Modernism and Postmodernism. In chapter one, Postmodernism was introduced in the light of art. Douwe W.Fokkema, in Literary History, Modernism, and Postmodernism (1989), gives a detailed explanation of the main conventions of Modernism:

The major convention of Modernism with regard to the composition of literary texts is the selection of hypothetical constructions expressing uncertainty and provisionality. It affects the relations between the text and other factors of the communication situation, as well as the organization of the text itself. (15)

Modernists emphasized uncertainty. Then again, for Modernists, the text is never completed. There is a special interest in hypothesis and the language used is always commented on. Finally the reader had a very important role in Modernism. (Fokkema 15). In addition, according to Fokkema Postmodernism was born in America, and possibly was made popular by Jorge Luis Borges (38). Nevertheless, Postmodernism is not a rigorously American or British, but an international movement. Its major formative influence is European existentialism. (Bertens 83) It should also be noted that Postmodernism and the Nouveau Roman could have been originated at the same time in different countries. Actually, Postmodernism played an important role in the expansion of the Nouveau Roman (Fokkema 39). The Nouveau Roman is not only defined by its opposing views against tradition; this opposition is only an aspect of it. This is the case of Postmodernism as well. Michel Butor is a representative of the Nouveau Roman and for him the novel is an experimental field, in which new forms are put to the test and from which new realities are discovered. (Pollmann 149) There is an interest in language, structure and different episodes in a narrative. Furthermore, as in Postmodernism, such episodes do not present a predictable frame of time. In the Nouveau Roman and in Postmodernism the image of a coherent and stable universe does not exist. (Pollmann 232) Authors such as Kafka, Faulkner and Sarraute are known for creating characters that are not easily identified by the reader. Moreover, discontinuity is an aspect shared by the Nouveau Roman and Postmodernism. (Pollmann 356)

On the other hand, going back to Modernism, while the Modernist artist gave great value to his point of view, the Postmodernist, on the contrary, held his views,

nevertheless, they were never preferred over the views of other writers or artists (Fokkema 40). This is a major point in this study, since Martínez and Vargas Llosa base their works, studied in this project, on such idea. Likewise, Postmodernism favors the idea of not choosing a particular point of view over another. Postmodernism refuses a system of hierarchies and therefore, an idea of an absolute truth (Fokkema 42). As a matter of fact, the relationship between the author and the text has changed. That is, unlike in the Modernist movement, Posmodernism is not concerned with how the text starts and how it finishes. (Fokkema 43) In addition, Posmodernism became a broad term that included all literary and cultural phenomena. (Bertens 42) Another difference between Modernists and Postmodernists is the latter's acceptance of reality's chaos. Postmodernists work within this chaos and acknowledge its changes and qualities. (Bertens 45) In fact, the lack of certainty in Postmodernism is one of the significant characteristics that separate this movement from Modernism. (Bertens 64) At the same time, identity has become as unclear as everything else. (Bertens 65) Accordingly, the postmodernist text presents itself as a system of fragments that might not have an obvious connection or resolution. For example, enumeration is a popular method among postmodernists. Hence the traditional ideas about time and place have been changed. (Fokkema 44)

Conversely, since each new text, in Postmodernism, is written over another one, then the code becomes the emphasis. Code can be understood as language or discourse. Fokkema maintains that:

The Postmodernist is convinced that the social context consists of words, and that each new text is written over and older one [...]. In Postmodernism the emphasis on the code is even clearer than in Modernist texts. In certain cases, the question of how a story should be told appears to be more important than the story itself. (46)

How the story is written is sometimes given more attention than the plot. In contrast, the role of the reader is highlighted in Postmodernism in comparison to Modernism. The reader may be questioned or may be the one choosing a particular ending. The reader might even become a character (Fokkema 48). Nonetheless, it is necessary to keep in mind that there are contradictions in Postmodernism. As a result, if postmodernists emphasize nonselection, then by doing so, the writer is selecting (Fokkema 49). Postmodernism uses and then subverts, the concepts it questions. (Hutcheon, *Beginning* 243) On the other hand, Andreas Huyssen claims that the postmodern artist works and tries to achieve new theories and practices of writing, painting or acting. The question of how codes, texts, images, and other cultural artifacts constitute subjectivity is raised as a historical question. (142)

In order to continue, it is helpful to point out that Postmodernism was first used insistently in the 1960s by literary critics such as Leslie Fiedler and Ihab Hassan who held widely divergent views of postmodern literature. During the early and mid-1970s the term gained a much wider popularity, encompassing first architecture, then dance, theater, painting, film, and music. (Huyssen 111) Whereas the postmodern break with classical modernism was reasonably visible in architecture and the visual arts, Postmodernism in literature has been more difficult to determine. In the 1970s

Postmodernism migrated to Europe via Paris and Frankfurt. Kristeva, Lyotard and Habermas were among the critics that began to explore Postmodernism. In the United States, meanwhile, critics started to discuss the crossing point of Postmodernism with French Poststructuralism in its American version.(Huyssen 111)

Pop was the scene in which Postmodernism appeared for the first time. In fact, Postmodernism has challenged Modernism's persistent opposition to mass culture. (Huyssen 115) Moreover, Andreas Huyssen suggests a distinction between the Postmodernism of the 1960s and that of the 1970s and early 1980s. The critic believes that the first Postmodernism criticized Modernism. This Postmodernism wanted to revive the tradition of the European Avant-garde and grant it an American style or form. Nevertheless, during the 1970s such attempt to critique was replaced by non-modernist and non-avantgardist terms. (116) It is important to take into account that the Avant-garde was:

...a revolution in the relationship of art to the physical world and to human experience [...] art and literature are set free from the requirement to copy and reflect something outside itself. Art becomes autonomous, sufficient unto itself and essentially meaningless because it is no longer required to make a commentary on the world. (Harris 3)

More specifically, Huyssen establishes four characteristics of the early Postmodernism, particularly of American Postmodernism. In the 1960s, Postmodernism presented a focus on the future and on new objectives and frontiers. There was also an iconoclastic attack on the *institution of art*. (119) Mass culture, for instance, was an accepted influence in

art. Huyssen, states that early Postmodernism was characterized by a technological optimism of segments of the 1920s Avant-garde. (121) A fourth characteristic of the early Postmodernism was the attempt to give popular culture validation. In contrast, such attempt challenged the principle of high art. (121) The 1970s, was characterized by a spreading of artistic expressions that were a product of modernist ruins. (Huyssen 124)

In chapter one, Postmodernism was approached from the perspective of history as well. An overview of the writing of history was given. At this point, examples or traits of postmodern art in the thinking of history will be explained. At the same time, this analysis will be the foreground for a study of Santa Evita. Tomás Eloy Martínez speaks about fiction and history in “Mito, Historia y Ficción en América Latina”:

La ficción y la historia se escriben para corregir el porvenir [...] Los mitos reflejan también los deseos secretos de la comunidad por crear símbolos y metáforas que le permitan al pasado transfigurarse en futuro [...] Pero tanto la historia como la ficción se construyen con las respiraciones del pasado [...] en esos espejos donde ambas se reflejan mutuamente, ya no hay casi fronteras: las diferencias entre ficción e historia se han ido tornando cada vez más hábiles, menos claras. (1)

This notion is clear in Santa Evita, since fiction and history come together in the creation and recreation of several Evas, even after Eva's death:

Algunas personas han visto el cuerpo en la CGT [...] Han pasado tres años y parece intacto. Hemos ordenado que le saquen radiografías [...] Anda todavía por ahí un escultor italiano al que encargaron un proyecto de monumento con sarcófago y

todo. El italiano hizo una copia en cera del cadáver. Se cree que es una copia perfecta, y que nadie podría distinguir cuál es cuál. (Martínez, Santa Evita 24)

Her body becomes another document that is traced, examined and copied. Martínez, in one of the footnotes in Santa Evita, comments on the copies of Eva's corpse:

Nunca vi las copias pero puedo imaginarlas. A fines de 1991 descubrí en el museo Whitney de Nueva York unas figuras humanas hechas con resinas de poliéster y fibra de vidrio, a las que confundí con personas vivas. [...] Todas las figuras miran hacia abajo porque, según uno de los catálogos: "La expresión de los ojos es lo único que el arte no puede reproducir". (133)

Nevertheless, documents or copies cannot be trusted completely, since political power and historians use and manipulate them constantly. Actually, such documents may disappear and therefore, they may lose their value as proof of events. (Martínez, Mito 6)

This is one of the main points presented in Santa Evita. In addition, if the archives have been organized and manipulated by a literate minority and by those with political power, then such construction of history is based on specific interests. Therefore, the novel, as genre, can also present its version of history and can be considered valuable. (Martínez, Mito 6)

I intend to analyze this aspect of Santa Evita. During the first few pages of the novel, the reader can see that the story will deal with numerous documents that have been manipulated in various ways:

Perón escribió durante cuatro noches de vigilia, mientras esperaba que lo asesinaran, la historia de su romance con Eva Duarte. Es el único texto de su vida

que construye el pasado como un tejido de sentimientos y no como un instrumento político, aunque su efecto (sin duda voluntario) en asestar al martirio de Evita, como una maza de guerra, contra la cara de sus adversarios. (22)

Perón wrote the only document that has not been understood as a political instrument. This document is the story of his romance with Eva Duarte. Interestingly, it reveals an emotional past, since most official documents focus on the political and economic events of a nation.

Later on in the novel, there is another instance where Eva describes the first time that she met Perón. The reader is told that this information is taken from another text:

En *La razón de mi vida*, Evita describió su encuentro con Perón como una epifanía: se creyó Saulo en el camino de Damasco, salvada por una luz que caía del cielo [...] Se conocieron entre los desconciertos del terremoto de San Juan. La catástrofe sucedió un sábado, el 15 de enero de 1944 [...] Los seres están suspendidos en su pasado pero jamás son los mismos: el pasado se va moviendo con ellos y, cuando uno menos lo espera, los hechos se han desplazado de lugar y significan otra cosa. Por raro que parezca, Evita es menos Evita en el noticiero de Sao Paulo que en el de Bombay. (189)

La razón de mi vida is a published text about Eva's life. Martínez mentions these types of texts in several occasions during the novel, which shows how different perspectives can enrich our view of history. Often, texts tend to overlap and even contradict each other.

Significantly, there is great emphasis on the use of notes taken by the characters as well:

El embalsamador, por ejemplo, ya no vivía sino para ella [...] En una de sus notas de trabajo se lee: “Agosto 15, 1954. Perdí toda idea del tiempo. He pasado la tarde velando a la Señora y hablándole. Fue como asomarme a un balcón donde ya no hay nada. Y sin embargo, no puede ser. Hay algo allí, hay algo. Tengo que descubrir la manera de verlo”. (27)

To include notes in the text is an attempt to bring the reader closer to it and to the documenting and writing process. Another character that also takes notes is Coronel Carlos Eugenio de Moorí Koenig. The president makes him responsible for Eva’s corpse, as stated earlier in this chapter: “Entonces, escribió: *Qué sé del Personaje: la Difunta?* Los documentos que he examinado fijan su nacimiento en dos lugares y en tres fechas distintas...”(135) Additionally, Martínez includes inventories in the narrative: “Inventario de los efectos hallados en el segundo piso de la Confederación General del Trabajo el 24 de noviembre de 1955...” (162)

Thus, Santa Evita reveals the research and the writing process of characters and of the author himself. Shumway explains: “As in *The Perón Novel*, Martínez creates numerous other narrators, including one called Tomás Eloy Martínez, who interviews and interacts with other characters in the novel.” (340) The next passage is taken from La novela de Perón: “Vea estas fotografías. Somos Perón y yo, un día de primavera, en Madrid [...] El General es una interminable contradicción de la naturaleza, un cuerpo de oso con hocico de búho [...] Tomás Eloy Martínez deja de hablar...” (Martínez 305) This is directly related to the new way of approaching history from a Postmodern perspective. For instance, the reading of memoirs is part of the novel as well:

Quien lea las memorias póstumas del doctor Pedro Ara (*El caso Eva Perón*, CVS Ediciones, Madrid, 1974), advertirá sin dificultad que le había echado el ojo a Evita mucho antes de que muriera. Una y otra vez se queja de los que piensan eso. Pero sólo un historiador convencional toma al pie de la letra lo que le dicen sus fuentes. (Martínez, Santa Evita 44)

In this passage, the author gives the reader information about Pedro Ara's memoirs. These memoirs are significant since one can see that his interest in Eva was quite strong even before her death. Finally, Martínez emphasizes that only a conventional historian takes sources as faithful documents of the events.

The sources, which the author has gathered to write his novel, are part of the theme and of the structure of Santa Evita. As a result, the process of collecting the information is as significant as the plot. In such system of documents, personal letters occupy a key place: “-Yo también estoy muy triste por tenerte lejos y no veo las horas de que vuelvas...” (Martínez, Santa Evita 44) These are lines from a personal letter that Perón wrote to Eva while she was in Spain. However, it is important to keep in mind that even if this letter never existed, the presence of several points of view should be considered. In the following passage, the author describes his research process and illustrates how documents can become as important as Eva herself:

Recordé el tiempo en que anduve tras las sobras de su sombra, yo también en busca de su cuerpo perdido (tal como se cuenta en algunos capítulos de La novela de Perón), y los veranos que pasé acumulando documentos para una biografía que pensaba escribir y que debía llamarse, como era previsible, La perdida. (63)

In this novel, documents and Eva's body have the ability to say something about the past.

In another work, Martínez also describes the process of gathering information:

Conocí a Juan Perón la aciaga noche del derrocamiento de Arturo Illia, a fines de junio de 1966. Hablé con él durante tres largas horas [...] De ese diálogo se publicó sólo una página, menos de trescientas palabras, en la edición especial que el semanario Primera Plana dedicó al golpe militar acaudillado por Juan Carlos Onganía. (Las memorias del general 9)

Conversely, the author explains that while being in the middle of writing Santa Evita, he encounters a variety of documents that shed light on the devotion that a significant number of people had for Eva:

No volví a tener noticias de los Masa hasta que me recliné en una aldea de New Jersey y continué la escritura de este libro [...] salí a buscar mi correspondencia [...] El remitente sólo se daba a conocer por sus iniciales, RM, y me enviaba una lista de veinte récords peronistas. Copio algunos, para dar una idea del insólito documento:

22 de febrero, 1951/ Héctor Yfray/ Récord mundial de permanencia en bicicleta: 118 horas y 29 minutos/ "Con el deseo de llegar hasta Evita para expresarle mi admiración"... (75)

Shumway in his book The Invention of Argentina (1991) explains numerous aspects of Argentine nationalism. He states that there is: "fascination with strong leaders [...] someone in tune with the nation, a spokesman of the people [...] Perhaps the mystifying success of Perón and Peronism emanated from wanting "a real *criollo*." (294) In fact,

Peron's government worked in favor of the labor class and the laws that protected these workers. Marysa Navarro Gerassi, in Los nacionalistas (1968), notes that: "Ningún otro gobierno en la historia argentina había concedido tal legislación a los obreros" (197). Meanwhile, Eva Perón was part of this government plan: "También ejerció el patronazgo a través de su famosa Fundación de Ayuda Social "María Eva Duarte de Perón." (Navarro 198) In order to continue, it is necessary to clarify several aspects of Argentine history. Shumway in his study titled "Tomás Eloy Martínez" gives details about this topic:

Argentina's prosperity had been attained under the rule of a smallish oligarchy dominated by a landed gentry and foreign traders. [...] Moreover, not everyone benefited from the country's bounty, particularly the working poor in the countryside and in the burgeoning slums of Buenos Aires." (338)

Perón entered this national scene and supported the union workers and the working class.

Going back to Santa Evita, certainly, as readers, we are brought closer to the writing process:

A fines de 1959 transcribí los monólogos de Alcaraz por pura inercia intelectual, y se los llevé para que los revisara. Tenía la impresión de que al pasar su voz por el filtro de mi voz, se perderían para siempre la parsimonia de su tono y la sintaxis espasmódica de sus frases. Esa, pensaba, es la desgracia del lenguaje escrito. Puede resucitar los sentimientos, el tiempo perdido, los azares que enlazan un hecho con otro, pero no puede resucitar la realidad. Yo no sabía aún –y aún faltaba mucho para que lo sintiera- que la realidad no resucita: nace de otro modo, se

transfigura, se reinventa a sí misma en las novelas. No sabía que la sintaxis o los tonos de los personajes regresan con otro aire y que, al pasar por los tamices del lenguaje escrito, se vuelven otra cosa. (85)

The author is aware that one of the limitations of written language is that it frequently puts aside the tone of voice, for example. In La memorias del general, Martínez explains: “Pero cuanto más investigaba, más se me confundían las verdades. Los documentos y, con frecuencia, también los recuerdos de los testigos contradecían a tal punto lo que Perón o los historiadores de Perón habían sancionado como verdad que a veces yo creía estar ante dos personajes distintos”. (13) Moreover, Martínez continues by adding that these memories were manipulated by several people:

...grabé las memorias que el General había dictado en las emanaciones previas a su secretario/mayordomo [...] José López Rega. A veces, Perón [...] iba llenando los vacíos de lo que López leía. Otras veces, el mayordomo corregía los recuerdos de Perón o los aderezaba con comentarios insólitos [...] Tardé casi una semana en ensamblar los pedazos del diálogo y componer una versión con la que Perón estuviera de acuerdo. (Memorias 11)

About this topic, Salem explains:

Oralidad versus literalidad son dos estratos divergentes que sin embargo mantienen en vigencia su nivel provocador. La oralidad necesita del marco escrito para legitimarse, para convertirse en discurso de poder. La literatura testimonial, como escritura, es, en sí misma, falsificación. Trabaja con dos niveles de subjetividad: la del lenguaje, y la del testimonio como construcción de recuerdos. (347)

Therefore, written language cannot be always faithful to speech. Martínez and Vargas Llosa play with this idea of testimony. In both cases, the reader is aware that the testimonies may touch the limits of fiction.

Moreover, Martínez refers to testimonies of characters that are also a result of other character's previous testimonies:

Cifuentes era un virtuoso del chisme. Recogía por toda la ciudad historias de la pareja Perón (él los llamaba así, a dúo, enfatizando la aliteración) y las dejaba caer luego en los oídos ávidos del Coronel. Ambos se reunían una vez por semana para escandir las verdades y mentiras [...] y transfigurarlas en informes confidenciales que Cifuentes repartía en los diarios y el Coronel usaba en sus cambalaches con otros agentes de inteligencia. (145)

These notions take us to one of the main points of this chapter. Documents have to be approached by considering that they are only a piece of what happened. In order to illustrate, the narrator explains: “Lo que sigue, mal que me pese, es una reconstrucción. O, si alguien lo quiere, una invención: una realidad que resucita. [...] Alcaraz habla. Yo escribo.” (86) It should be understood that there is information about Eva's life in the novel that reveals contradictions in some cases. (Martínez, Santa Evita 135) The novel shows us that documents are not completely reliable. Thus, Martínez claims: “Las fuentes sobre las que se basa esta novela son de confianza dudosa, pero sólo en el sentido en que también lo son la realidad y el lenguaje: se han infiltrado en ellas deslices de la memoria y verdades impuras.” (Santa Evita 143) Clearly, the author emphasizes the fragility of the documents and language itself. Interestingly, he adds that memory and truth are many

times imperfect. In addition, Martínez notes that documents by themselves are not enough for historians. Often times they have to be revised constantly. In the end, they can still be misleading. (Martínez, Santa Evita 143)

Rather than explaining the steps in the writing or research process, Martínez takes information and places it directly in the novel. In reality, this is a product that comes from the writer's experience; therefore his perspective may influence it:

Lo que narra este capítulo se funda exclusivamente en mis diálogos con él (siete cassettes de una hora cada uno). Vuelvo a oírlos y advierto que Cifuentes, con énfasis sospechoso, me explica cuán sencillo le resultaba salir y entrar del Servicio de Informaciones del Ejército en aquellos días finales de noviembre, 1955 [...] Y sin embargo, no sé con cuál versión quedarme. ¿Por qué la historia tiene que ser un relato hecho por personas sensatas y no un desvarío de perdedores como el Coronel Cifuentes? Si la historia es –como parece– otro de los géneros literarios, ¿por qué privarla de la imaginación, el desatino, la indelicadeza, la exageración y la derrota que son la materia prima sin la cual no se concibe la literatura? (Martínez, Santa Evita 146)

In contrast, it is indicated that this section is a result of seven tape recordings. Because of their oral nature, the writer reminds us of the possibility that history may be a construction of unorganized and imaginative pieces. In order to weave his novel, the author also includes military documents as another type of historical source. (Martínez, Santa Evita 148)

Conversely, Santa Evita also provides a number of references to other published and unpublished works that illustrated the different endeavors of Eva's corpse. For instance, the author indicates: "Los leí todos: los diarios, las biografías, las revistas que reconstruyen el vía vía del cadáver. Se publicaron bosquejos de documentos cuando el cuerpo de Evita fue entregado a Perón en 1971. Nadie, hasta donde recuerdo, habla de Arancibia". (Santa Evita 245) It is necessary to emphasize that during the research process, the information will possibly be corrected, reordered and sometimes changed: "Fui fiel a lo que me contó Emilio Kaufman pero no sé si Emilio fue fiel a lo que sabía de Evita. En su relato desentonaban unos pocos nombres y fechas, que he corregido al cotejarlos con las memorias de otra gente" (Martínez, Santa Evita 253). The author says that he is faithful to some pieces of information; however, he changes and rearranges them to fit his creative purpose. On the other hand, he has to rely on the memory of others, bringing a larger scope of views into the narrative.

Fundamental to this novel is the system of *fichas* that sometimes appears in the middle of the narration. Martínez explains that Moori Koenig was the author of these *fichas*. (Santa Evita 148). It could be implied that these pieces of information aid the reader to visualize what in reality happens in historical writing; documents and records coexist with the author's discourse. (Martínez, Santa Evita 263) With this in mind, there are also characters that, in their testimonies, rely on published texts about Eva, in order to tell the story from their point of view:

...me dijo Cifuentes. “Pensé que la frase era un retrato penitente de sí mismo. Me equivoqué: la había copiado de un libro de Evita. Puede encontrarla en la edición de *Mi mensaje* que anda por los quioscos”.

NOTA: Cifuentes aludía a un volumen de 96 páginas, publicado por el sello Ediciones del Mundo, con prólogo de Fermín Chávez. En la portada, debajo del título *Mi mensaje*. “El libro desaparecido durante 32 años”, Evita sonríe, con una hoguera a sus espaldas (Martínez, Santa Evita 287).

These notions about a character’s testimony and therefore his or her point of view can be contrasted with the following passage: “¿Era un cuaderno de modales? Todas las hojas encabezadas por el título *Ensayos* repetían *no debes no hagas no tomes no uses*.” (Martínez, Santa Evita 290) These lines are supposed to come from notes that Eva took. The author even takes the reader closer to Eva and her views.

At the same time, Martínez gives credit to Cifuentes, who was the person who copied a few of the pages from Eva’s notebooks: “Cifuentes, que copió unas pocas hojas de los cuadernos en 1956, me aseguró que había respetado escrupulosamente las faltas originales de ortografía. Le debo la descripción de la letra de Evita, de los cuadernos y de los nudos con que los ató el Coronel”. (Santa Evita 291) Sometimes, the author provides almost every detail about the document: “Vi una libreta de tapas negras con un rótulo que pregonaba, en caligrafía florida: *Perteneciente al Prof. Dr. Pedro Ara Sarría*. [...] Alcancé a leer...” (Santa Evita 308). Another example is the following footnote that refers to the letter, that Perón wrote to Eva during her trip to Spain, mentioned earlier in this chapter: “La carta parece una parodia pero no lo es. Fue reproducida en *El ultimo Perón*

de Esteban Peicovich [...] en *Eva Perón* de Nicholas Fraser y Marysa Navarro...” (44)

The narrator broadens on the topic about accepting information as absolute truth:

Ordené los papeles y comencé a copiarlos. Era interminable. Aparte de los informes de Santiago de Chile, Moori había acumulado chismes de croupiers, actas de registros civiles e investigaciones históricas de periodistas de Los Toldos. Años después, cuando quise pasar en limpio esos apuntes y convertirlos en el comienzo de una biografía, me desvié a la tercera persona. Donde la madre decía: “ Desde que Evita vino al mundo sufrí mucho”, a mí se me daba por escribir: “Desde que nació Evita, su madre, doña Juana, sufrió mucho”. No era lo mismo. Casi era lo contrario. Sin la voz de la madre, sin sus pausas, sin su manera de mirar la historia, las palabras ya no significaban nada. Pocas veces he combatido tanto contra el ser de un texto que se quería narrar en femenino mientras yo, cruelmente, le retorció la naturaleza. Nunca, tampoco, fracasé tanto [...] sólo cuando la voz de la madre me doblegara, habría relato. La dejé hablar; entonces, a través de mí. Y sólo así, me oí escribir: “Desde que Evita vino al mundo sufrí mucho...” (366)

Significantly, the author emphasizes that he also loves what cannot be explained entirely. He is also aware that as a writer, he may have the tendency to manipulate different aspects of the documents. Martínez has considerable amounts of information, however he sometimes turns away from these archives in order to give value to the spaces not covered by history: “...Acumulé ríos de fichas y relatos que podrían llenar todos los espacios inexplicados de lo que, después, iba a ser mi novela. Pero ahí los dejé, saliéndose de la historia, porque yo amo los espacios inexplicados.” (390)

Having presented examples of documents and archives in Santa Evita, I intend to move toward the topic of historiography. One of my principal aims is to focus on the role of the documents and their interpretations within the parameters of historical writing. Hayden White in his study “Rhetoric and History”, published as a section of Theories of History, establishes that:

Every verbal proposition about a particular thing existing in an absolute past- in all of the instances of interest to us- refers us to an entity which we know only through another verbal proposition. The interpretative or assessmental problem cannot be solved by perception, for when we go to the documents to check the proposition, we are confronted by other – and usually a host of other- verbal propositions which must themselves be interpreted or assessed as to their truth value before the comparison can be made. This is why all historical discourse, although presented in the form of a series of literal statements, can be shown on analysis to be a set of figurative statements (7).

Every historical discourse comes from a series of literal discourses. Hence, they are interpretations. Indeed, these interpretations are the ones portrayed in Santa Evita.

I should stress at this point that in chapter one, the views of Linda Hutcheon about historiographic metafiction were addressed. Hutcheon claims that historiographic metafiction today is written within the frame of the nature of representation in historiography. (Politics 50) Moreover, the scholar believes that postmodern fiction is not disconnected from historiography. Accordingly, in Santa Evita such relation is illustrated:

Si bien los documentos rara vez sirven para establecer un criterio de verdad, son en cambio una referencia constante para los criterios de legitimidad. Un ejemplo notable son los documentos fraguados que tanto Evita Duarte como Juan Perón presentaron al Registro Civil de Junín cuando se casaron, el 22 de octubre de 1945. Allí Perón aparecía como soltero; era viudo. En el caso de Evita, eran falsos la edad y el lugar de nacimiento. Pero ambos necesitaban, en ese momento, establecer una identidad pública más o menos definitiva, y a través de esos papeles fraguados creyeron que lo hacían. De hecho, la única biografía oficial de Perón escrita durante su primera presidencia, omitía por completo el dato de que Perón se había casado por primera vez en enero de 1929 y que su esposa había muerto en septiembre de 1938 (Martínez, Mito 6).

That is to say, documents are an important source to establish legitimacy. An example is the information found in the papers presented to the authorities when Eva and Juan Perón got married.

Nonetheless, historiographic metafiction does not comply with the separation of a historical fact and fiction. As a matter of fact, it brings into question the reliability of discourses, human productions and representations. (Hutcheon, Poetics 93) In addition, Hutcheon continues:

Historiographic metafiction explicitly contests the presumptive power of history to abolish formalism. Its metafictional impulse prevents any suppression of its formal and fictive identity. But it also reinstates the historical, in direct opposition to most arguments for the absolute autonomy of art. (Poetics 94)

The importance of metafiction is that it signals towards the formal idea of history and also its fictional nature. Nothing is absolute, or history or art. Significantly, if there are no more absolutes, then intertextuality plays an important role in the discussion about postmodernism and historiographic metafiction. Hutcheon states that:

...intertextuality replaces the challenged author-text relationship with one between reader and text, one that situates the locus of textual meaning within the history of discourse itself. A literary work can actually no longer be considered original; if it were, it could have no meaning for its reader. It is only as part of prior discourses that any text derives meaning and significance. (Poetics 126)

Certainly, intertextuality brings to our attention the relationship between the novel and the reader. The text is only a portion of other discourses.

Likewise, as readers, we have to be aware of how our knowledge of past events may become part of other texts. This reality has a limitation: knowledge arrives to us in the form of other discourses. (Hutcheon, Poetics 127) Then again, it is important to consider intertextuality because history is also part of other texts and consequently, it is part of other interpretations. (Hutcheon, Poetics 143) Santa Evita is a clear example of such system of discourses.

In order to continue, it is essential to note that narrative representation is significant in a study about the writing of history. Postmodernism has changed the notions of narrative representation. Hence, the production of the novel and how it is received has been understood in a different manner. In fact, the social, the historical, the aesthetic, among others, are now emphasized. (Hutcheon, Poetics 40) These notions are illustrated,

in the first place, through the narrative discourse of Santa Evita. María del Carmen Tacconi de Gómez, in her study Identidad y Mito en Novelas de Fausto Burgos y Tomás Eloy Martínez, elaborates on the topic of narrative representation:

Santa Evita, de Tomás Eloy Martínez [...] se presenta como un texto construido sobre la base de una minuciosa investigación como el entramado de voces de testigos y de relatos documentales. Se trataría, en esta perspectiva, del cuidadoso informe de un investigador mucho más que la ficcionalización de un creador. Este es el efecto que Tomás Eloy Martínez aspira a producir en el destinatario; sin embargo, el proceso no resulta tan sencillo, más allá de la adhesión o el rechazo previos del lector que tiene opinión formada sobre la figura de Eva Perón. (127)

Santa Evita is based on the structure of an investigation. The effect that the author wants to create is not of a simple fictional story, but one of an intricate system of points of view and pieces of information. Additionally, Santa Evita is not a biography, since there are different voices that take the reader through numerous episodes in the life of Eva Perón and through the movements of her corpse through out the city: “Santa Evita escapa holgadamente a los límites de una biografía, puesto que las voces narradoras se ocupan tanto de la trayectoria vital de la protagonista como de los desplazamientos de su cadáver embalsamado”. (Tacconi de Gómez 128)

Moreover, Tacconi de Gómez explains that the epigraphs also contribute to the narrative representation of the novel:

...me interesa destacar uno de los dos epígrafes. El primer epígrafe, firmado por Silvia Plath, dice: “Morir/es un arte como cualquier otro./ Yo lo hago

extremadamente bien.” Dos conceptos fundantes de este epígrafe se instalarán en el discurso como ejes isotópicos: muerte y representación teatral. La muerte, porque la diégesis muestra a una moribunda primero y las peripecias de su cadáver después. La idea de representación teatral organiza una red semántica menos obvia. (129)

That is, there are two main ideas in the novel. One of them is death and the other one is the theatrical representation.

Within the topic of representation, it is noteworthy to bear in mind that Eva’s image was popularized in the beginning through radio, theatre and film. At the same time, through the novel, the reader finds out that often, Eva and her husband represented different roles in life. (Tacconi de Gómez 130) Fundamental to the formation of the character of Eva, are the titles of the different chapters. They are direct quotes from Eva Perón:

Se trata de otro rasgo del discurso que apunta a poner de relieve el rigor documental. Sin embargo, como una marca de ambigüedad recurrente [...] cuatro títulos pertenecen a La razón de mi vida, que ya se sabe, firmó Eva Perón pero no escribió. (Tacconi de Gómez 130)

This is another attempt to emphasize the characteristics of a document. It is important to note that four of the titles belong to La razón de mi vida, signed but not written by Evita. Moreover, the discourse is closed by an Epilogue, where the author thanks a number of people. This is another way of bringing to light the documental aspect of the novel. (Tacconi de Gómez 131)

In order to discuss how the story line is presented, it is significant to point out that the story is constructed around three main axes: power as aspiration and exercise, secondly, the dead body as a conflict generator and finally the metafictional information and reflection. Power as aspiration can take us back to the time when Eva first decided to travel to Buenos Aires. (Tacconi de Gómez 131) This idea of power is developed in a variety of ways; one of them is the following:

Cuando va a alcanzar su máxima aspiración, la candidatura a la Vice-presidencia de la nación, se ve obligada a renunciar. No se trata de un renunciamento espontáneo: su marido la obliga desembozadamente. Este episodio desnuda entretelones de una relación que muchas claves muestran como muy distinta de las apariencias. (Tacconi de Gómez 132)

This also shows the different layers of this relationship and how appearances may deceive.

I should stress at this point that the corpse becomes a focal point during the narration. It is a symbol of social change for the poor. The body is kept in the CGT building (Confederación General de Trabajo), which gives it a hybrid characteristic, a mixture of the religious, the patriotic and the political. Simultaneously, metafictional reflection and information can be observed in two levels. One of them is the textual body of the novel and the other is the discourse that takes a variety of shapes such as the notes and the Epilogue. (Tacconi de Gómez 134) Accordingly, there are three main narrative accounts. The first one is the story of Eva's corpse, which follows a chronological order and is the less known part of the traditional history. The second account is the story of

Eva's life, which presents an inverse chronology, since it starts with her death. (Tacconi de Gómez 136) It is necessary to clarify that the last narrative account, tells the story of the investigation that was the foundation to the novel. Martínez creates a type of self-fictionalization and brings together literary references, intertextual relations, among others. (Tacconi de Gómez 137)

Much of what has been explained in the previous section of this chapter is grounded on narrative discourse and narrative representation. The way in which this narrative is represented is directly related to how the author sees history and its writing process. For this reason, at this point, I will go back to a topic approached in chapter one of this project. Parody was introduced through Jameson's ideas. In order to continue, parody will be discussed as a source of confrontation between the aesthetic and the external world. Likewise, Linda Hutcheon's views will be addressed. In A Poetics of Postmodernism, Hutcheon clarifies that:

...parody -that seemingly introverted formalism- that paradoxically brings about a direct confrontation with the problem of the relation of the aesthetic to a world of significance external to itself, to a discursive world of socially defined meaning systems (past and present)- in other words, to the political and the historical. (26)

Parody allows the aesthetic and reality to come together. Sometimes they interact in a political and historical space. At the same time, parody has a satirical intention and it comments on a previous work or artistic style.

Hutcheon continues to explain that parody will be approached as a new definition of the eighteenth-century theories. This new definition will take us to an exercise of

establishment of differences. (Poetics 26) For instance, in Santa Evita, the author claims that:

Algunos de los mejores relatos de los años cincuenta son una parodia de su muerte. Los escritores necesitaban olvidar a Evita, conjurar a su fantasma. En “Ella”, un cuento que escribió en 1953 y publicó cuarenta años después, Juan Carlos Onetti tiñó el cadáver de verde, lo hizo desaparecer en un verdor siniestro... (198)

In this case, parody brings Eva Perón into the literary space. The different ways in which the artists choose to portray Eva, will touch social and political aspects of specific time periods. In addition, this is another example of Martínez's focus on different points of view.

On the other hand, in the novel, Eva's hairdresser is introduced:

El peluquero la estudió de arriba abajo con curiosidad procáz [...] - Así salvé del ridículo a su personaje- me dijo-. Era más lógico un peinado de 1860 para un vestuario de 1876 que el otro corte moderno, de puntas enruladas. Al fin de cuentas, Evita fue un producto mío. Yo la hice. Diez años después Perón diría lo mismo. (Martínez, Santa Evita 82)

It is interesting to see that Martínez includes the voice of a hairdresser who believes that he was the one who invented Evita by giving her a sophisticated look. If he can create Evita, then anybody can. He finishes by telling us that Perón would say these same words in the future about his wife. At the same time, Perón and the hairdresser are placed at the same level. Parody takes place because the president, who is educated and has political power, creates an image of Eva just as someone who does not have intellectual

preparation and does not have power in society. At this point, it is helpful to recall Abel Posse's novel: La pasión según Eva. In this novel, there is an episode, which also introduces a similar topic of the creation of different images of Eva Perón. Eva recalls a doll that her mother gave her when she was a child. Posse describes a doll that was inside a box and that was not very beautiful, however, Eva liked her because of her blond hair and her almost transparent skin. This description call into mind Eva's image when she is in her coffin years later. This is a characteristic of Postmodernism, models are multiplied and become interdependent.

In fact, the interviews in the novel do not follow a model of *truth*. Such *truth* is not more important than the intricate web of sources that the author creates. (Díaz 183) For instance: "...Renzi, the butler of the Peróns, who rescues Evita's letters, notebooks and a manuscript of her book Mi mensaje [...] through his view we see an Evita who was the epitome of beauty, fashion..." (Díaz 183). Renzi then is another vehicle by which the reader sees another side of Eva. However, the contents of the book or the letters are not presented, therefore as readers, we only receive Renzi's interpretation of his findings.

Meanwhile, Martínez continues to include in his narrative several conceptions of Eva from very different characters. Two of these notions belong to an actress who helped Eva when she arrived to Buenos Aires and to the make-up artist of two of the movies in which Eva participated. (Martínez, Santa Evita 12) In addition, Coronel Carlos Eugenio de Moori Koenig's idea of Eva becomes significant throughout the novel:

En los últimos dos años, el Coronel había espiado a Evita por orden de un general de Inteligencia que invocaba, a su vez, órdenes de Perón. Su extravagante deber

consistía en elevar partes diarios sobre las hemorragias vaginales que atormentaban a la Primera Dama, de las que el presidente debía estar mejor enterado que nadie.

(Martínez, Santa Evita 18)

Martínez continues: “El Coronel no desdeñaba ningún trabajo de espionaje, y para vigilar a Evita sirvió algún tiempo en la corte de sus edecanes. El poder es sólo un tejido de datos, se repetía, y vaya a saber cuál de todos los que recojo me servirá un día para fines más altos.” (Santa Evita 19) In contrast, the author includes the position of Eva’s enemies when she was still alive: “No por eso le tuvieron lástima sus enemigos, que también eran millares. Los argentinos que se creían depositarios de la civilización veían en Evita una resurrección obscena de la barbarie. [...] La súbita entrada en escena de Eva Duarte arruinaba el pastel de la Argentina culta.” (Santa Evita 70)

On the other hand, we are also told that Jorge Luis Borges uses parody in order to write about the nation’s reaction when Evita died.

Casi al mismo tiempo, Borges, más sesgado, más elusivo, denigraba el entierro en “El simulacro”, un texto breve cuyo personaje único es un hombre de luto, flaco, aindiado, que exhibe una muñeca de pelo rubio en una capilla ardiente de miseria. El propósito de Borges era poner en evidencia la barbarie del duelo y la falsificación del dolor a través de una representación excesiva... (Martínez, Santa Evita 198)

In fact, Mario Vargas Llosa introduces a similar idea of the falsification of sorrow in La Fiesta del Chivo. The Peruvian writer shows the different ways in which Dominicans

expressed their sorrow after Trujillo's death. Vargas Llosa's novel will be analyzed in depth in the following chapter of this project. Whereas parody continues in Santa Evita:

Quienes mejor han entendido la yunta histórica de amor y muerte son los homosexuales. Todos se imaginan fornicando locamente con Evita [...] Hace muchos años vi en París *Eva Perón*, una comedia [...] de Copi. Ya no me acuerdo de quién hacía de Evita. Me parece que Facundo Bo, un travesti (sic). (199)

In this case, the homosexual community, who might not be considered as an accepted voice by some dogmatic historians, takes part in the representation of Evita's story of love and death.

Like parody, myth occupies an essential place within the parameters of postmodernism. Chapter one expanded on this point. Myth as a type of speech, clarified by Roland Barthes, was at the center of such discussion. It was also stated that myth could take many forms. Myth was not limited to the oral and the written historical discourse. On the other hand, Foucault's notions I addressed as well. One of the aspects of myth that is relevant to this project is the fact that myth may reveal a great deal about history. The previous chapter also made reference to myth within the frame of the historical novel.

Indeed, Martínez elaborates on the topic of myth by providing a variety of examples in his novel:

Evita murió y su cuerpo fue velado durante doce días bajo la cúpula de jirafa de la Secretaría de Trabajo, donde se había desangrado atendiendo las súplicas de las multitudes. Algunos tuvieron que ser arrancados a la fuerza porque trataban de

suicidarse a los pies del cadáver con navajas y cápsulas de veneno. Alrededor del edificio funerario se colgaron dieciocho mil coronas de flores... (Santa Evita 20)

Hence, myth has the quality of permanency. Furthermore, Evita is transformed into myth. Her body will never change in the minds of the people of Argentina: “El ataúd fue colocado sobre una cureña de guerra y tirado por una tropilla de treinta y cinco representantes sindicales en mangas de camisa. Diecisiete mil soldados se apostaron en las calles para rendir honores...” (Martínez, Santa Evita 21). Additionally, Perón decides to preserve her body:

Para satisfacer la súplica de que no la olvidaran, Perón ordenó embalsamar el cuerpo. El trabajo fue encomendado a Pedro Ara, un anatomista español, célebre por haber conservado las manos de Manuel de Falla como si aún estuvieran tocando *El amor brujo*. (Martínez, Santa Evita 21)

Undoubtedly, to keep the body as it was when Eva was still alive, it had to go through a chemical process. Maryssa Navarro Gerassi writes about several documentaries and representations that had as central topic Eva and her myth:

La historia en estos casos se populariza, se traduce para un público amplio, para reconfigurarla en una biografía envuelta en imágenes y anécdotas sensacionalistas. El proceso parecería ser global ya que la fascinación con el mito de Evita se expande por los continentes... (Evita. Mitos y representaciones 67)

History then becomes part of all those stories of a community. Navarro adds about the creation of documentaries:

Por medio de imágenes monocromadas, fotos, clips, grabaciones de discursos, recortes periodísticos, entrevistas, todo ello a menudo gobernado por una voz omnisciente, supuestamente neutral que se posiciona fuera del retrato, el documental abre un espacio para la polifonía de voces con la pretensión de revelar un mundo complejo sin privilegiar necesariamente una mirada sobre otra. (Evita 91)

Martínez is one of many voices that wanted to reveal a complex reality. He is part of this system of voices. In Santa Evita , meanwhile, copies of Eva's body were made in order to protect her from the consequences of the collapse of the government. Dr. Pedro Ara speaks to Eva's mother, doña Juana:

–Cuando el gobierno de su yerno empezó a desbarrancarse, pedí que me hicieran estas copias, por precaución. Si Perón cae, me dije, Evita será el primer trofeo que van a buscar los vencedores. Trabajé día y noche con un escultor, descartando una figura tras otra [...] A un olvido hay que oponerle muchas memorias, a una historia real hay que cubrirla con historias falsas. Viva, su hija no tenía par, pero muerta ¿qué importa? Muerta, puede ser infinita. (Martínez, Santa Evita 54)

A forgotten memory has to be covered with several other memories, therefore, Eva's corpse could be eternal if it was covered with several other bodies or copies of them. Dr. Ara continues: “-Llévese ahora una de las copias- continuó el médico, sin oírla-. Y entiérrela solamente en la Recoleta. Yo mandaré una más al Vaticano. Y otra al viudo, en Olivos o donde quiera éste. A la verdadera la enterraremos usted y yo, a solas, y no le diremos nada a nadie más.” (Martínez, Santa Evita 55) It is significant to establish that

the official version of history can be covered with several other versions. Evita's dead body is a metaphor of this construction:

Si esta novela se parece a las alas de una mariposa –la historia de la muerte fluyendo hacia delante, la historia de la vida avanzando hacia atrás, oscuridad visible, oxímoron de semejanzas- también habrá de parecerse a mí, a los restos de mito que fui cazando por el camino, a la yo que era Ella, a los amores y odios del nosotros, a lo que fue mi patria y a lo que quiso ser pero no pudo. Mito es también el nombre de un pájaro que nadie puede ver, e historia significa búsqueda, indagación: el texto es una búsqueda de lo invisible, o la quietud de lo que vuela.
(Martínez, Santa Evita 65)

The author clarifies that in the process of writing, he was also collecting pieces of Eva's myth. Then he explains that the word "mito" is also the name of a bird, which is invisible. Martínez adds that if history means a search, then the text is a search of what we cannot see.

However, the writer claims that he did not want to tell his story nor Eva's story based on a myth:

No iba a dejar que las supersticiones me arredraran. No iba a contar a Evita como maleficio ni como mito. Iba a contarla tal como la había soñado: como una mariposa que batía hacia delante las alas de su muerte mientras las de su vida volaban hacia atrás. La mariposa estaba suspendida siempre en el mismo punto del aire y por eso yo tampoco me movía. Hasta que descubrí el truco. No había que

preguntarse cómo uno vuela o para qué vuela, sino ponerse simplemente a volar.

(Martínez, Santa Evita 78)

As a result, he wanted to tell the story of her death and of how her life was left behind. Moreover, he uses the butterfly metaphor and it is important to see that by flying he also means writing. He will tell the story of his writing as well.

At the same time, Martínez elaborates on Eva's myth:

...Para mucha gente, tocar a Evita era tocar el cielo. El fetichismo. Ah, sí; eso ha tenido una enorme importancia en el mito. Los ayudantes de Evita dejaban caer fajos de dinero cuando ella pasaba en tren por las poblaciones. La escena ha sido registrada en casi todas las películas documentales sobre su vida. (Martínez, Santa Evita 193)

Martínez notes that part of Eva's myth was the different objects that represented that myth or that made Eva alive again. Luis Alberto Romero, in his book A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century (2002) explains that:

From 1947 onward, Eva Perón, the president's wife, devoted herself from the secretariat of Labor [...] to carrying out the duties of mediating between the union leaders and the government, expediting the negotiation of conflicts with a very personal style that combined persuasion with coercion [...] Eva Perón thus turned out to be the very incarnation of the welfare state, which through the Lady of Hope acquired a personal and emotive dimension. (107)

Significantly, Santa Evita presents another side of myth:

El mito se construye por un lado y la escritura de los hombres, a veces, vuela por otro. La imagen que la literatura está dejando de Evita, por ejemplo, es sólo la de su cuerpo muerto o la de su sexo desdichado. La fascinación por el cuerpo muerto comenzó aun antes de la enfermedad, en 1950. Ese año, Julio Cortázar terminó *El examen*, novela imposible de publicar en más de un sentido, como él mismo lo declara en el prólogo de tres décadas después. Es la historia de una multitud animal que se descuelga desde todos los rincones de la Argentina para adorar un hueso en la Plaza de Mayo. La gente espera no sabe qué milagro [...] Evita es el regreso a la horda, es el instinto antropófago de la especie, es la bestia iletrada que irrumpe, ciega, en la cristalería de la belleza. (Martínez 197)

This is another example of how myth is often times stronger and lasts longer than the written word.

In contrast, myth can take numerous forms:

Cada quien construye el mito del cuerpo como quiere, lee el cuerpo de Evita con las declinaciones de su mirada. Ella puede ser todo. En la Argentina es todavía la Cenicienta de las telenovelas, la nostalgia de haber sido lo que nunca fuimos, la mujer del látigo, la madre celestial. (Martínez, Santa Evita 203)

In Postmodernism, different models are essential. Thus, Evita is still a myth for many in Argentina. Such myth can take different shapes. In order to illustrate this reality, Martínez broadens on the subject: “Hacia las once de la mañana, José Nemesio Astorga (EL CHINO) trató de llegar a las oficinas de la Fundación en busca de lo que Evita le había prometido. Ni siquiera pudo acercarse. La fila de postulantes daba dos vueltas

completas a la manzana...” (Santa Evita 221) When Eva was alive, the myth existed already. She was a mother, a protector, almost a saint: “....sólo en la muerte se podía ser, como Evita, inmortal” (Martínez, Santa Evita 300). Certainly, the author is playing with the notion of the immortality of the soul. However, one can assume that Eva, as a myth, is eternal: “...Ella moría casi a diario, como cristo en el sacrificio de las misas. Pero no pensaba repetírselo a nadie. Todas las sinrazones de la fe, creía, habían servido sólo para empeorar el mundo” (Martínez, Santa Evita 332). Once again, Evita is a myth that even after death is alive. For instance, Eva Perón was different figures at one time:

...Algunos paseaban en angarillas la efigie de un santo indiscernible, suspendido en el ademán de repartir panes de plástico y monedas de fantasía. Otros veneraban la foto triunfal de Evita, vestida con la pollera estilo María Antonieta que lucía en las veladas del teatro Colón... (Martínez, Santa Evita 378)

Clearly, Eva is almost a saint that needs to be adored.

In fact, Evita is seen as the Virgin Mary, as can be observed in the following passage: “...A los balcones se asomaban otras Evitas esculpidas en yeso, a las que habían aderezado con tocas de Virgen María. Todas esgrimían una sonrisa que se esforzaba por ser benévola pero que brotaba de costado, artera, amenazante” (Martínez, Santa Evita 379). On the other hand, according to Tacconi de Gómez:

En el plano de los fenómenos propiamente míticos, la regularidad causa-efecto que señalo configura el motivo que se designa como “la venganza de la momia” [...] El motivo mítico de la venganza de la momia motoriza la acción del primero de los hilos narrativos. La venganza, digamos de paso, identifica la conducta de Eva

Perón recurrentemente en la obra que nos ocupa y en sus múltiples biografías.

(140)

This mythical idea brings about a series of effects. This vengeance is also parallel or identified in Eva's own conduct that has been noted on several biographies.

After analyzing Eva's numerous representations and myths, it is essential to approach the subject of simulation. Jean Baudrillard, in Simulacra and Simulation, elaborates on the subject:

So it is with simulation, insofar as it is opposed to representation. The latter starts from the principle that the sign and the real are equivalent (even if this equivalence is utopian, it is a fundamental axiom). Conversely, simulation starts from the *utopia* of this principle of equivalence, *from the radical negation of the sign as value*, from the sign as reversion and death sentence of every reference. Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum.
(Baudrillard 346)

Simulation bases itself on the negation of the sign corresponding to the real. Since there is no referential, then the model acquires its own independent value. Numerous such models are the ones seen in Santa Evita. La Pupé or the doll, Eva Duarte, Eva Perón, Evita, Evita- the fashion statement, Eva the wax copy, among others, are all individual models that can be combined, confused and even projected. Therefore, Evita is the perfect example of a postmodern character in this novel. Eva Perón is a historical figure

that can be many at the same time and can be presented and represented in numerous ways. Even after death she can be multiplied. (Díaz 182)

According to Baudrillard, simulation lacks origin, then it is possible to speak about simulation within a postmodern context. (1) In simulation there are no referentials. (Baudrillard 2) Additionally, we require a visible past, which reassures us about our end. (Baudrillard 10) Baudrillard continues: “History is our lost referential, that is to say our myth. It is by virtue of this fact that it takes the place of myths on the screen” (Baudrillard 43). It is important to point out, that there is a difference between parody and simulation. In the case of parody there is a referential. Since there are no referentials in simulation, then it becomes independent from duplicates or representations. (Baudrillard 2) In fact:

Simulation is characterized by a *precession of the model*, of all the models based on the merest fact- the models come first, their circulation, orbital like that of the bomb, constitutes the genuine magnetic field of the event. The facts no longer have a specific trajectory, they are born at the intersection of models, a single fact can be engendered by all the models at once. (Baudrillard 16)

Martínez plays with this idea of the models, their circulation and sometimes their lack of trajectory. Eva’s corpse is hidden, traced and even confused with several models during the entire novel.

The models intersect and become different things to different characters. For instance:

...her body is hidden behind the screen of this same theater while members of the military are trying to decide where to store it. The daughter of the projectionist, who lives behind the theater, discovers the body and secretly plays with it, as if it were a doll [...] Eva-object, Eva-doll, Eva embodiment of others' desires...(Díaz 185)

It is interesting to see that the girl who plays with Eva-La Pupé or the doll is the daughter of a man who works with representations. As a projectionist he brings to the screen what can only be seen through a projector. On the other hand, what the girl sees in her doll is not what the entire country sees in Eva or Eva's corpse. Furthermore, every character creates a different image of Eva. For instance is "Esa mujer" (2001) by Rodolfo Walsh, Coronel Koenig, speaks about Eva: "Esa mujer [...] Estaba desnuda en el ataúd y parecía una virgen. La piel se le había vuelto transparente. Se veían las metástasis del cancer, como esos dibujitos que uno hace en una ventanilla mojada". (99) Once again, the reader is able to recall the description of Eva's doll in La pasión según Eva, mentioned earlier in this chapter.

At the same time, Eva's hairdresser shows the author numerous copies of Eva's hairstyles:

Para demostrar que no exageraba, me guió hacia la trastienda de la peluquería. Encendió las luces de un saloncito cuyas paredes estaban tapizadas de espejos. Tal vez fueran un presagio de que la misma realidad iba a repetirse muchas veces, en tiempos sucesivos. Tal vez una advertencia de que Evita no se resignaba a ser una y empezaba a regresar en bandadas, por millones, pero entonces no lo entendí así. Vi,

por primera vez, sólo una cara de la realidad o, si se prefiere, la primera lumbré de un largo incendio. Desplegadas en semicírculo, vi doce cabezas de vidrio expuestas sobre pedestales de yeso pintado, que reproducían otros tantos peinados de Evita. (Martínez, Santa Evita 83)

Interestingly, in La novela de Perón, Martínez introduces a similar idea. The author repeats the description of the eyes of a fly, which has many sections; therefore, it can see reality fragmented or numerous realities. Another example of the use of models in Santa Evita is the use of references to La razón de mi vida and Mi mensaje. In these two works, Evita appears as a devoted wife in the shadow of her husband's prominence and as a social benefactor of the poor. As a matter of fact, "the importance of these two books and their value as image makers is highlighted by the fact that the novel draws its chapter headings from quotes from these two books, as well as from other speeches Evita makes" (Díaz 184). In Postmodernism different limits are broken and models become essential. Díaz writes "throughout the novel we see her image plastered on the walls of Buenos Aires, as object of veneration in altars of her devoted poor, in film strips, in movie posters and in news clippings" (Díaz 185). Fermin Chavez describes Eva's ability to become numerous Evas: "...asombra su capacidad para multiplicarse en obras y en gestos, en caricias y en mensajes". (107) On the other hand, the artist may become so involved with his work that he can become the work of art. That is the case of Dr. Ara: "Soy aunque Eva no quiera, su Miguel Ángel, su hacedor, el responsable de su vida eternal. Ella es ahora – ¿por qué callarlo?- yo. Siento la tentación de inscribirle, sobre el

corazón, mi nombre: Pedro Ara.” (Martínez, Santa Evita 157) In Postmodernism limits become indistinguishable.

In summary, this chapter has presented Santa Evita in the light of a historical reconstruction. The historical novel and, more specifically, the historical novel in Latin America have been discussed. For that reason, history and Postmodernism were analyzed, keeping in mind the differences between Modernism and Postmodernism. As a result the differences between the two took us to the topic of historical discourse and its evolution. Meanwhile, representation in Martínez’s novel was the introduction to a study about the postmodern text, parody, myth and simulation. Eva’s body was the starting point for an analysis of the author’s use of parody, myth and simulation.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LABYRINTHS OF MEMORY

In this chapter, I will analyze Mario Vargas Llosa's novel La Fiesta del Chivo (2000). This narrative takes, as a point of departure, the story, shared by many Latin American countries, of a violent totalitarian government in the Dominican Republic. There are several reasons to include this novel in a study about history and literature. For instance, La Fiesta del Chivo has been considered an allegory of other regimes such as Fujimori's in Perú. (Snauwaert 230) On the other hand, for Vargas Llosa, the events told by the official history, are only the beginning of his project. (Rodríguez Silva 403) The author resumes a historical account and at the same time, comments on the principles of a regime, that of Leonidas Trujillo in the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1961. It is important to keep in mind that the author, does not engage in any moral judgment about Trujillo's dictatorship. On the contrary, he lets his characters tell the stories about their lives during the regime. This chapter will cover topics such as dictatorships in Latin America, the characteristics of the novel about dictatorships, the Postmodern text, myth and Bakhtin's perspectives about the novel as genre, to name a few. These topics reveal characteristics of the relation between history and literature. La Fiesta del Chivo shows how multiplicity, models, memory and chaos enhance our understanding of history and fiction.

There are several ways to describe the development and the characteristics of dictatorships in Latin America. Latin American regimes constitute a problem that has political, social, economic and cultural implications. In addition, there are consequences

that have an effect on the media and human rights. Since the 19th century, violence, which finds its roots in power, has caused numerous problems. Accordingly, there have been official discourses that have justified such violence. However there is another discourse that shows a different version of the events. Julio Nelson, in his study “Una melodía disonante en *La Fiesta del Chivo*”, describes the gap that Spain left in the American continent:

...el vacío de Poder que dejó el retiro de España en unas tierras donde ella, la España retardada, la España feudal y clerical, la España de la Inquisición, adversa al espíritu liberal y científico del Renacimiento, no pudo sembrar una economía moderna, como la que gradualmente fue desarrollando Inglaterra en Norteamérica, donde una sólida burguesía industrial empuñó el timón político al término de la guerra con Londres. (332)

That is, the dictatorships followed the processes of emancipation in Latin America. Conversely, Spain left a power gap accompanied by weak economies.

It should not go without saying that; essential to this project is to understand the relation between the United States and Latin American countries like the Dominican Republic. There are several moments during La Fiesta del Chivo, that the author mentions the United States in relation with the Dominican Republic's economy:

Las relaciones espléndidas de los pulidos *managers* norteamericanos con los ramplones generales o coroneles no se debían tanto al cariño genuino como a glaciales intereses económicos [...] Estados Unidos, en efecto, manejaba la

economía de la República Dominicana hacía ya varios lustros cuando Trujillo tomó el gobierno, en 1930. (Nelson 333)

Thus, the United States managed the economy of the Dominican Republic, when Trujillo took power in 1930. Yet, in the particular case of the Dominican Republic and as stated in La Fiesta del Chivo, Trujillo and his brothers had complete control of the banks, the industry and the land. Nonetheless, the relations with the United States were strong until the Dominican Republic became dangerous due to the influence that it received from the Cuban Revolution. It is key to note that the United States broke relations with Trujillo because of his refusal to leave power. However, in La Fiesta del Chivo there is no reference to such event. (Nelson 335)

Clearly, on the one hand, La Fiesta del Chivo is a novel about a dictatorship: “Las recensiones de *La fiesta del Chivo*, coinciden en señalar que esta novela se inscribe dentro de la tradición del subgénero de la novela del dictador latinoamericano.” (Rodríguez Silva 406) Significantly, this novel shows a number of fictional stories. There is a history, common to many Latin American countries, accompanied by violence that has been hidden by different governments.

In order to continue, it is necessary to discuss the topic of dictators in Latin America. Ángel Rama, in his book Los dictadores latinoamericanos, explains that during Modernism in Latin America, writers believed the dictator to be a product of the relationship between an individual who had all the power and a society that, for the most part, lacked education. (7) One person had all the power even in societies that were seen as modern, more specifically in rural areas. The dictator found the needed support to stay

in power in such societies, more than in terror, the army or the Church. (Rama 8) For instance, this is the case of the Dominican Republic. There was a tendency in literature to focus the attention on the characteristics of the dictator. (Rama 9)

In fact, Miguel Ángel Asturias, author of El señor Presidente (1946) approached the Latin American reality through the image of the dictator. The dictator gathered not only individual characteristics but also aspects of Latin American society. (Rama 9) Moreover, if the dictator is understood as an archetype, then an individual representation or a biography will not be a focal point. On the contrary, the historical, the economic and the social aspects will be the ones that will provide a more complete understanding of the dictator. (Rama 10) Vargas Llosa presents Trujillo, in his novel, as the man who influenced economy, society and history. Moreover, the explanation of power is not possible through biographies or psychological analysis independent from the people. In order to understand power, the dictator needs to be placed in his community, within a social and economic frame. (Rama 11) In La Fiesta del Chivo, the reader sees Trujillo interacting with the military, the Church, his family and his own weaknesses. Specifically, the relation between the dictator and Dominicans known as *compadrazgo* is crucial in this novel:

Trabar una relación de compadrazgo con un campesino, con un obrero, con un artesano, con un comerciante, era asegurarse la lealtad de ese pobre hombre, de esa pobre mujer, a los que, luego del bautizo, abrazaba y regalaba dos mil pesos [...]
Había fundado empresas y hecho negocios para dar trabajo y hacer progresar a este

país, para contar con recursos y regalar a diestra y siniestra, y así tener contentos a los dominicanos. (183)

Consequently, Dominicans were in debt with the dictator. He became their benefactor and the people were happy to an extent with this father figure.

On the other hand, it is fundamental to take into account the time and the circumstances in which writers construct their novels. This interest in revising the history and the representation of past dictators, according to Rama, is related to the words *art deco*. Although World War I has generally been taken as the dividing line between the Art Nouveau and the Art Deco epochs, actually, the latter was conceived in pre-war years, and like its predecessors, it was a developing style that neither began nor ended at any particular moment. (Duncan 6) In reality, the style gathered different influences. Many of these came from the avant-garde painting styles of the early years of the century. (Duncan 6) The style developed in France. Nevertheless, in Europe, and later in the US, it received a more intellectual interpretation based on theories of functionalism and economy. These are aspects of a twentieth-century preoccupation with contemporary sources and inspiration. (Duncan 6) Traditional concepts of beauty were redefined. Yet, the high-style's only real success abroad was in American architecture, where it was implemented to enhance America's new buildings, particularly skyscrapers and movie palaces. The US, in the early 1920s, looked to Paris for inspiration and leadership in art as they always had in the past. (Duncan 7)

However, Rama makes a distinction between the European and North American versions of *art deco* and the reality in Latin America. (13) Rama believes that in the first

case, there is nostalgia and an idealization of the past. Yet in Latin America *deco* is: “permanencia de cosas que están viviendo.” (Rama 14) There is a concern with present-day sources and ideas. Writers do not attempt to glorify nations; these authors want to understand a recent past that is seen even today. Nevertheless, they do not have contact with the dictator or the small group that had the power. The writers of novels about dictatorships try to enter the palaces, the homes of the dictators and their consciousness. The following passage from La Fiesta del Chivo is an example of how Vargas Llosa illustrates the dictator’s behavior:

A Trujillo le divertía –un juego exquisito y secreto que podía permitirse- advertir las sutiles maniobras, las estocadas sigilosas, las intrigas florentinas que se fraguaban uno contra otro, La Inmundicia Viviente y Cerebritito – pero, también, Virgilio Álvarez [...] para desplazar al compañero, adelantarse, estar más cerca y merecer mayor atención, oídos y bromas del Jefe. (252)

As a result, these authors are able to see the world through concrete operations of power. Hence, there is a drastic inversion of their vision. (Rama 15)

Rama states that the national current of revising history was born in Argentina, however it developed in all Latin American countries. In contrast, there has been a general distrust in the explanations given by the bourgeoisie in relation to the dictatorships, especially the military dictatorships. (Rama 18) Many writers like Vargas Llosa have used the novel to tell the story of a society and its dictator. Therefore, the Peruvian author describes the use of power in the Dominican Republic as well. Nonetheless, William Shakespeare established the idea of the man who is blinded by

power and who was dehumanized by absolute power. In *Macbeth*, one can see how a man loses everything even his own humanity. (Rama 52) Trujillo and many of his followers also become blinded by power.

It is helpful to clarify that one of my principal aims is to approach Vargas Llosa's novel from the perspective of Postmodernism. For this reason, it is fundamental to discuss the postmodern text: "Postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable. Its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy." (Lyotard 15) That is, postmodern knowledge makes us more aware of the existence of different versions of events. For instance, La Fiesta del Chivo begins with the protagonist, Urania Cabral and her return to her country of origin. Her arrival will be the starting point of several stories.

Urania goes back to Santo Domingo and the city is the place where her memory takes her back to her childhood. Therefore, memory is a fundamental topic in the novel. Since memory escapes the boundaries of a rigid version of history, then it is possible to state that memory is central in a discussion about the postmodern text. In the following passage, Urania's experience is the focus of the novel's beginning pages:

Entonces, el Hotel Jaragua miraba al Malecón de frente. Ahora, de costado. La memoria le devuelve aquella imagen -¿de ese día?- de la niña tomada de la mano por su padre, entrando en el restaurante del hotel, para almorzar los dos solos [...]
Al Jaragua de entonces lo habían demolido y reemplazado por este voluminoso

edificio color pantera rosa que la sorprendió tanto al llegar a Santo Domingo tres días atrás. (12)

As a result, Urania's memory takes her from the present to the past when she lived with her father in Santo Domingo. When characters in a novel are witnesses of specific events, they can shed light on historical episodes. In addition, these characters can also create their own ideas about the events and sometimes change them through their own memories. (Salem 350) This is the case of Urania, her father and, in general terms, the Dominican people. Urania degrades Trujillo, however, the reader tends to believe her every word because in the novel she was a witness and a victim of the government.

The reader follows Urania through specific episodes of her childhood, to Ciudad Trujillo for example, the capital:

No recuerda que, cuando ella era niña y Santo Domingo se llamaba Ciudad Trujillo, hubiera un bullicio semejante en la calle. Tal vez no lo había; tal vez, treinta y cinco años atrás, cuando la ciudad era tres o cuatro veces más pequeña, [...] y tenía el alma encogida de reverencia y pánico al Jefe, al Generalísimo, al Benefactor, al padre de la Patria Nueva. (Vargas Llosa, La Fiesta 15)

In consequence, Urania's memory goes beyond the description of a city, it takes the reader to a fearful city, to Trujillo's regime.

Moreover, Vargas Llosa expands on his character's promenade along the area of hotels in Santo Domingo, which leads to more reminiscences:

En vez de dar media vuelta y emprender el regreso hacia el Jaragua, sus pasos, no su voluntad, la llevan a contornear el Hispaniola y regresar por Independencia, una

avenida que, si no la traiciona su memoria, avanza desde aquí [...] Cuántas veces caminaste de la mano de tu padre [...] Cómo echarías de menos esos años en que eras tan importante, papá. (19)

The street Independencia is the one that takes Urania back in time. Significantly, the second person singular introduces the reader to Urania's memory or, as some critics say, to her own conscious. In the meantime, her monologue with her father begins. The author goes from the present, to the past and to the present once again.

Nonetheless, the streets open the door to the character's memory and the different smells have a connection to the past as well:

Es un olor cálido, que toca alguna fibra íntima de su memoria y la devuelve a su infancia, a las trinitarias multicolores colgadas de techos y balcones, a esta avenida Máximo Gómez. ¡El Día de las Madres! [...] Las niñas elegidas del Colegio Santo Domingo para traerle flores a María Julia, la Excelsa Matrona, progenitora del Benefactor, espejo y símbolo de la madre quisqueyana. (21)

She goes back to her days in Colegio Santo Domingo, which is associated almost immediately to the image of La Excelsa Matrona, Trujillo's mother.

I should stress at this point that when Urania sees her father, her memory leads the reader towards different levels in time and space in the Dominican Republic:

Sube la escalera de pasamanos descolorido y sin los maceteros con flores que ella recordaba [...] Ésta era una casita moderna, próspera [...] ha caído en picada, es un tugurio [...] en el viejo sillón de cuero de respaldar y brazos anchos, el anciano

embutido en un pijama azul y pantuflas [...]. Para mirarlo ella tenía que alzar la cabeza, estirar el cuello; ahora, si se pusiera de pie, le llegaría al hombro. (70)

Moreover, while Urania goes up the stairs of her father's home, she realizes that this house does not look like the one in her memory. She notices that time has taken its toll on the house and her father. This passage will be part of a later discussion in this chapter about time and space in the novel as well.

In addition, Vargas Llosa compares Urania's apartment in the United States to her father's house in the Caribbean Island. Both places have books in common. Even so, the content of these books is possibly very different. Interestingly, the writer introduces the topic of history and with it, the existence of testimonies and memoirs:

Mi departamento de Manhattan está lleno de libros –retoma Urania-. Como esta casa, cuando era niña. De derecho, de economía, de historia. Pero en mi dormitorio, sólo dominicanos. Testimonios, ensayos, memorias, muchos libros de historia [...] La Era de Trujillo, [...] Lo más importante que nos pasó en quinientos años [...] En esos treinta y un años cristalizó todo lo malo que arrastrábamos, desde la conquista... (72)

Urania says that she read about Trujillo and his regime, and in her view, this dictatorship enhanced every negative aspect of the country. Interestingly, Urania mentions books about testimonies, memoirs and history. In Vargas Llosa's novel, she will give her testimony as well. The monologue continues and Urania's recollections reveal aspects of the regime and myths, such as the image of one of Trujillo's sons.

-No te imaginas cuántas veces me soñé con él, papá [...] El Padre de la Patria Nueva hubiera querido que su primogénito- “¿Era hijo suyo, papá?”- tuviera su apetito de poder y fuera tan enérgico [...] con una conducta zigzagueante de explosiones histéricas y largos periodos de abulia que ahogaba en drogas y alcohol.
(141)

In this passage, Urania, through her monologue, goes back to those days when Trujillo's son was in the fantasies of most young Dominican girls. Consequently, the author refers to Ramfis' negative conduct, which devalues this mythical image. Besides, Urania questions Ramfis' relation to Trujillo. Later on in this chapter, I will analyze such passages in the light of the degradation of mythological figures.

During the confrontation with her father, Urania sheds light into her life away from her country, but not away from her fears: “-Sí, papá, a eso debo haber venido- dice, en voz tan baja que apenas alcanza a oírse-. A hacerte pasar un mal rato [...] Arrancaste de tu memoria las cosas desagradables. ¿También lo mío, lo nuestro, lo borraste? Yo, no. Ni un día.” (149) Urania asks her father if he has forgotten those years under Trujillo's power. She also tells him that she was not able to forget. Different events in her past life are linked, reminding the reader of the author's well-known technique of *vasos comunicantes*. This point will be explained and expanded shortly: “¿Cómo has terminado recordando a Ramfis Trujillo? Siempre la fascinan esos extraños encaminamientos de la memoria, las geografías que arma en función de misteriosos estímulos, de imprevistas asociaciones.” (153) In this passage, the author goes from Urania's perspective to his, and explains how the intricate paths of memory always fascinate his character.

Meanwhile, Urania's memory serves as a testimony that opposes any official version of history:

O de esa historia sórdida de los últimos años de doña María Martínez, la Prestante Dama, la terrible, la vengadora, la que pedía a gritos que se sacara los ojos y despellejara a los asesinos de Trujillo. ¿Sabes que terminó disuelta por la arterioesclerosis? ¿Que la codiciosa sacó a escondidas del Jefe todos esos millones y millones de dólares? (157)

Urania, after reading conscientiously the history of her country, goes through a list of events, one of them was the money stolen by La Prestante Dama. Similarly, Trujillo's death, reported in different newspapers, goes through the filter of her memory and a new perspective of those years is introduced:

-¿Cómo te enteraste de que lo habían matado? El 30 de mayo de 1961 estaba ya en Adrian. [...] entró a la habitación que Urania compartía con cuatro compañeras y le mostró el titular del periódico que llevaba en la mano "Trujillo killed". "Te lo presto", dijo ¿Qué sentiste? Juraría que nada, que la noticia resbaló sobre ella sin herir su conciencia [...] Recuerda, en cambio, que días o semanas después, en una carta de sister Mary venían detalles sobre aquel crimen, sobre la irrupción de los caléis en el colegio para llevarse al obispo Reilly, y sobre el desorden y la incertidumbre en que se vivía. (228)

It is clear that the second person singular is the one that introduces a dialogue between Urania and her own conscious. While she remembers, every episode in her past enhances this system of memories and dialogues. The reader observes an intricate arrangement of

pieces of Dominican history. Vargas Llosa clarifies that Urania did not feel anything when she found out about Trujillo's assassination.

Meanwhile, Urania's memory is the starting point of her conversation and confession to her relatives in Santo Domingo. She tells them the reason why she left her country at a young age and never sent a letter to her family.

–Papá corrió a su cuarto, con el pretexto de ir al baño – prosigue una Urania fría, casi notarial-. “*Bye-bye*, hijita, que te vaya bien.” No se atrevió a despedirse mirándome a los ojos. -¿Te acuerdas de esos detalles?- la tía Adelina mueve su puñito [...] -Se me olvidan muchas cosas –responde Urania, con viveza-. Pero, de aquella noche, me acuerdo todo. Ya verás. (543)

While Urania tells her version of the story to her family members, her memory takes her back to the day when her father said goodbye to her before her arranged meeting with El Generalísimo, Trujillo. Urania emphasizes that she remembers every detail. She can go back to the past as she pleases. The character is empowered by her memory.

It is relevant to note that while we travel with Urania through her memories, we perceive the point of view of a child –Urania- during the Era of Trujillo. The official version of history is put aside in order to give center stage to an innocent and unconventional perspective, that of a young girl: “–La palabra *kitsch* no existía aún, creo [...] Años después, cuando la oí o leí, y supe qué extremos de mal gusto y pretensión expresaba, me vino a la memoria la Casa de Caoba. Un monumento al *kitsch*.” (550) Clearly, Urania's impression of Trujillo's home is negative. As the novel approaches the end, Urania tells her relatives to forget her story. It is possible to state that Vargas Llosa,

through this character, attempts to comment on the importance of memory: “Espero que me haya hecho bien, contarles esta historia truculenta. Ahora, olvídenla. Ya está. Pasó y no tiene remedio. Otra, lo hubiera superado, quizás. Yo no quise ni pude.” (563) It is important to point out that every character manipulates memory and that memory is the starting point for numerous stories in the novel.

So far, I have dealt with memory and how it is presented in La Fiesta del Chivo. Memory reinforces the idea of several versions of history because of its flexibility. In the first and second chapters of this project, the topic of the official history and the other histories or stories was addressed. In order to continue it is necessary to refer to Hayden White’s views on history and the different manifestations of a historical work. In his work Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe, the scholar discusses a variety of aspects of a historical piece. For instance:

I will consider the historical work as what it most manifestly is – that is to say, a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of explaining what they were by representing them. (2)

Certainly, a historical work should be considered a verbal construct that at the same time, points to past events and to the processes of reconstructing such events. White continues to clarify that a historian and a writer create stories. (6)

White expands on the matter by focusing on the historian’s act of writing:

Historical accounts purport to be verbal models, or icons, of specific segments of the historical process [...] therefore, the historian must first prefigure as a possible

object of knowledge the whole set of events reported in the documents [...] It is also poetic in so far as it is constitutive of the structure that will subsequently be imaged in the verbal model offered by the historian as a representation and explanation of “what really happened” in the past [...] In the poetic act which precedes the formal analysis of the field, the historian both creates his object of analysis and predetermines the modality of the conceptual strategies he will use to explain it. (30)

That is to say, the poetic act takes place when the historian explains his version of the events. In contrast, this act will open the door to strategies that the historian will use to develop his account.

It is critical, then, to bear in mind that points of view, documents and testimonies will influence different versions of history. Vargas Llosa is aware of the significance of working with various testimonies. One of the concepts that the author uses to achieve his artistic purposes is *los vasos comunicantes*. Through *los vasos comunicantes*, the author associates different episodes from the past and present or different dialogues and perspectives in his novel through a variety of stimuli. Such association brings to the surface a new system of signs or a narrative tension different from the original. On the other hand, *los vasos comunicantes* can connect the main story lines in La Fiesta del Chivo:

El procedimiento varguiano quizá más conocido, que también domina la estructura global de FCH, son los “vasos comunicantes” [...] Concretamente, FCH integra tres grandes líneas narrativas: primero, el retorno de Urania que, años después de haber

abandonado la República Dominicana vuelve a visitar a su padre, repudiado por el régimen trujillista; segundo, las conversaciones que tiene Trujillo, apodado “el Chivo”, con algunos de sus partidarios y, finalmente, la conspiración que se trama contra el mismo dictador. (Snauwaert 220)

Hence, Vargas Llosa’s ties different points of view. An object, sound or even smell can connect one point in time with another or one point of view with a different one. In other words, *los vasos comunicantes* is a catalyst or a channel that points towards a new system of meaning. That is the case, for example, of Urania’s, her father’s and Trujillo’s perspectives.

For this reason, it is possible to say that Urania’s perspective is an example of how *los vasos comunicantes* enhances the narrative. The author constantly goes from one character or point in time to another:

Encara a su padre y reconstruye a través de su padre, el doctor Agustín Cabral, la figura del dictador Trujillo. Urania no le da tregua a su padre [...] Pero tampoco tiene tregua consigo misma, pues el diálogo que establece es consigo misma, diálogo violento ... (Rodríguez Silva 403)

Through her father, Urania reconstructs the historical time of the Era de Trujillo. In fact, Vargas Llosa chooses to Agustín Cabral for such reconstruction, even though he was a close member of Trujillo’s government who fell from the dictator’s grace. Part of Urania’s testimony is the violent tone or the anger that accompanies her words, especially when she speaks to her father. Snauwaert continues:

Estas tres líneas se desarrollan de manera paralela hasta el capítulo 15 y acaban fundiéndose completamente en la segunda parte del libro. Aunque el capítulo 16 continúa la línea narrativa de Urania, la lógica resulta interrumpida por el asesinato de Trujillo narrado en el capítulo anterior. A partir de este momento las conversaciones con el dictador ceden el paso a las represalias que toma la guardia trujillista contra los asesinos. Los nueve últimos capítulos mezclan pues el relevo en el poder con las reflexiones de Urania y sólo son alterados por unos saltos temporales que se refieren a la figura de Trujillo. (221)

The variety of dialogues or monologues that interrupt each other sometimes is another example of how Vargas Llosa uses *los vasos comunicantes*. The following is an example of how a picture opens the door to the past:

Urania respira hondo. Examina la habitación. [...] Hay dos fotos [...] La otra foto es de su madre: jovencita [...] Siente frenar el automóvil a la puerta de casa. Su corazón da un brinco [...] Escucha, sin entender, el breve diálogo al pie de la escalera [...]

-Ha venido a visitarla el Presidente, señora. ¡El Generalísimo, señora!

-Dile que lo siento, pero no puedo recibirlo. Dile que la señora de Cabral no recibe visitas cuando Agustín no está en casa.

[...] Urania pone la foto de su madre en el velador, vuelve a la esquina de la cama.

Arrinconado en el sillón, su padre la mira alarmado.

-Eso es lo que el Jefe hizo con su secretario de Educación... (73)

When Urania sees her mother's picture, Vargas Llosa takes the reader to the day when the dictator visited her mother. Urania is suddenly a young girl again. As her mother rejects Trujillo's visit, there is a return to the present as Urania puts her mother's picture down.

A similar example of *vasos comunicantes* takes place later on in the novel. Urania is speaking to her relatives about the time when her father was not considered a loyal servant of Trujillo anymore:

-La muerte de Trujillo fue el principio del fin para la familia –suspira Lucindita [...]

-Comenzó antes – la corrige la tía Adelina y Urania se interesa en lo que dice. [...]

-Con la carta en El Foro Público, unos meses antes de que mataran a Trujillo [...] Aníbal fue el primero que la leyó.

-¿Una carta en El Foro Público? –Urania busca, busca en sus recuerdos-. [...]

-Supongo que nada importante, [...] –dijo su cuñado en el teléfono- [...] ¿No has leído *El Caribe*?

-Me lo acaban de traer, aún no lo he abierto. [...]

-Bueno, hay una carta ahí [...] Disparates. Acláralo cuanto antes. (279)

From a present conversation between Urania and her relatives, the reader goes to the past, to the day when *El Caribe* published a letter about her father. *El Caribe* was a newspaper that usually published the names of the people that were considered a threat to Trujillo and his government. The author not only describes the events of that day, but more

specifically, he includes the phone conversation that Urania's father, Agustín Cabral, had with his brother-in-law about this letter.

In the following passage, the reader is able to see Urania's perspective in a different light:

No lo entiendes, Urania. Hay muchas cosas de la Era que has llegado a entender; algunas, al principio, te parecían inextricables, pero, a fuerza de leer, escuchar, cotejar y pensar, has llegado a comprender que tantos millones de personas, machacadas por la propaganda, por la falta de información, embrutecidas por el adoctrinamiento, el aislamiento, despojadas de libre albedrío, de voluntad y hasta de curiosidad por el miedo y la práctica del servilismo y la obsecuencia, llegaron a divinizar a Trujillo. (82)

Accordingly, the second person singular in this case can be seen as Urania's own conscious and therefore, as her perspective about her country's history and the years of the regime.

In contrast, when Urania speaks to her father, she asks him numerous questions, as seen previously in this chapter. These questions could be taken as rhetorical or as a dialogue with herself. In any case, her perspective prevails:

-¿Valía la pena, papá? ¿Era por la ilusión de estar disfrutando del poder? A veces pienso que no, que medrar era lo secundario [...] Que Trujillo les sacó del fondo del alma una vocación masoquista, de seres que necesitaban ser escupidos, maltratados, que sintiéndose abyectos se realizaban. (83)

As stated before, Urania also mentions Trujillo's son:

-No te imaginas cuántas veces me soñé con él, papá [...] El Padre de la Patria Nueva hubiera querido que su primogénito- “¿Era hijo suyo, papá?”- tuviera su apetito de poder y fuera tan enérgico [...] con una conducta zigzagueante de explosiones histéricas y largos periodos de abulia que ahogaba en drogas y alcohol.
(141)

In this case, there are two points of view, that of a young girl and that of a woman who has read and analyzed in depth her country's history.

Vargas Llosa continues to expand on Ramfis through Urania's eyes:

¿No había sido grotesca, por ejemplo, la manera como Ramfis desbarató el recibimiento, que, para desagraviarlo por el fracaso en la Academia Militar de Fort Leavenworth, le preparó el Generalísimo? Hizo que el Congreso [...] lo nombrara jefe del Estado Mayor Conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas [...] Qué sorpresa [...] que confusión se apoderaron del Jefe, al entrar al yate y descubrir el estado calamitoso, de nulidad babosa en que la orgía viajera había dejado al pobrecito Ramfis. (156)

She was able to read about the regime from the outside. Such opportunity gave Urania the distance to build her assessment of the events. Therefore, Urania created her idea about Dominican history. In the following passage, cited earlier in this chapter, Vargas Llosa includes the day when Urania found out about Trujillo's death. In fact, the news on the newspaper are contrasted with her reaction:

¿Cómo te enteraste de que lo habían matado? El 30 de mayo de 1961 estaba ya en Adrian. [...] cuando la *sister* encargada del dormitory entró a la habitación que Urania compartía con cuatro compañeras y le mostró el titular del periódico que

llevaba en la mano “Trujillo killed”. “Te lo presto”, dijo ¿Qué sentiste? Juraría que nada. (La Fiesta 228)

The questions in second person singular, take the reader to Urania’s monologue or dialogue with her father and herself. This inner dialogue appears once again at the end of the novel: “– Yo a ti te voy a querer mucho, tía Urania –le susurra en el oído y Urania siente que la embarga la tristeza-. Te voy a escribir todos los meses. No importa si no me contestas. [...] “Si Marianita me escribe, le contestaré todas las cartas”, decide.” (569) In this passage, the author focuses on Urania’s resolution to have contact in the future with Marianita, her niece.

At the same time, another perspective that is part of La Fiesta del Chivo is that of Trujillo, the dictator.

Sucede que los diálogos que, por lo demás, son muy tradicionales, muchas veces resultan dinamizados por unos saltos en la perspectiva. [...] (Henry Chirinos) Vestía un traje que al Generalísimo le pareció un monumento de mal gusto: entre plomizo y verdoso, con resplandores tornasolados [...] parecía embutido en su obeso cuerpo con calzador [...] Los verbos “pareció” y “detectó” indican claramente que se nos presenta la imagen que el personaje Trujillo se forma de su colaborador, Chirinos, que por eso se interrumpe la narración efectuada por el narrador. (Snauwaert 222)

That is, the numerous dialogues in the novel alternate and consequently, the perspective changes from one character to another. As a result, different points of view are part of the

narrative. This is the case of Trujillo's perspective. The reader is able to observe how he thinks and how he perceives the people that surround him.

Indeed, there is a movement from one perspective to another, especially in the case of the dialogues between Trujillo and Abbes García:

En nuestra novela, esta autonomía y esta flexibilidad se observan sobre todo en unas alternancias entre las focalizaciones de los personajes, como se da el caso en la conversación entre Trujillo y Abbes García, el jefe del Servicio de Inteligencia Militar [...] –Buenos días- respondió. El coronel Johnny Abbes había dejado sobre su escritorio el informe de cada madrugada. [...]

-¿Café, Excelencia?

Johnny Abbes estaba de uniforme [...]

Constatamos que, al lado de la alternancia lógica de las palabras pronunciadas en el diálogo entre Trujillo y Johnny Abbes, también se perfila un vaivén entre las dos perspectivas. (Snauwaert 224)

In this passage, it is clear that the author emphasizes two different points of view. This is an example of how perspectives alternate. It is also a commentary about history itself and its multiple versions.

Additionally, although Vargas Llosa uses the third person singular for many passages of his novel, there are clear moments when El Jefe's perspective is predominant:

El Jefe encontró un paisito barbarizado por las guerras de caudillos, sin ley ni orden, empobrecido, que estaba perdiendo su identidad, invadido por los hambrientos y feroces vecinos. Vadeaban el río Masacre y venían a robarse bienes,

animales, casas, quitaban el trabajo a nuestros obreros [...] No sólo justificaba aquella matanza de haitianos del año treinta y siete; la tenía como una hazaña del régimen [...] ¿Qué importan cinco, diez, veinte mil haitianos si se trata de salvar a un pueblo? (16)

The last question is key to understand Trujillo's view. Trujillo believed that he should rescue the Dominican Republic from poverty. On the other hand, his tone is one of segregation towards Haitians.

Nevertheless, within the frame of the same character, one finds more than one perspective. In the following passage, it is one of fear:

Despertó, paralizado por una sensación de catástrofe. Inmóvil, pestañeaba en la oscuridad, prisionero en una telaraña, a punto de ser devorado por un bicho peludo lleno de ojos [...] Tenía unos minutos todavía, pues, maniático de la puntualidad, no saltaba de la cama antes de las cuatro [...] “A la disciplina debo todo lo que soy”.
(27)

The last passage shows an obvious contrast between fear and complete control of his actions. Furthermore, the reader is able to observe Trujillo's routine and even his thoughts about discipline. It is important to remember that during his youth he was part of the police force.

Las cuatro en punto, ahora sí [...] Los huesos le dolían y sentía resentidos los músculos de las piernas y la espalda, como hacía unos días, en la Casa de Caoba, la maldita noche de la muchachita desabrida [...] Ansioso, observó las sábanas: la informe manchita grisácea envilecía la blancura del hilo [...] Este no era un

enemigo que pudiera derrotar como a esos cientos, miles, que había enfrentado y vencido a lo largo de los años. (29)

The author shows the dictator's conscious; he goes deep into his worries and insecurities, just as Ángel Rama describes.

Meanwhile, Vargas Llosa refers to one of the aspects of the United States that El Jefe detested: "Pero Trujillo detestaba ese aire postizo que resfriaba, esa atmósfera mentirosa. Sólo toleraba el ventilador, en días extremadamente calurosos. Además, estaba orgulloso de ser el-hombre-que-nunca-suda." (169) Trujillo was proud to be considered the man who never sweats. However, Trujillo's image is always contrasted with his human limitations:

Y, en ese momento, como un garrotazo en la cabeza, lo sobrecogió la duda [....] bajó la cabeza, como para concentrarse en una idea, y, aguzando la vista, ansiosamente espió [...] Ahí estaba: la mancha oscura se extendía por la bragueta y cubría un pedazo de la pierna derecha [...] Lo sacudió un ramalazo de rabia. Podía dominar a los hombres, poner a tres millones de dominicanos de rodillas, pero no controlar su esfínter. (181)

Once again, the author introduces us to the dictator's profound fear and aggravation. His frustration of evident.

Likewise, Trujillo's desire for power is clear when Vargas Llosa presents his perspective:

Era verdad lo que le había dicho: a diferencia de los granujillas de sus hermanos, de la Prestante Dama, vampiro insaciable, y de sus hijos, parásitos succionadores, a él

nunca le importó mucho el dinero. Lo utilizaba al servicio del poder. Sin dinero no hubiera podido abrirse camino en los comienzos, porque había nacido en una familia modestísima de San Cristóbal, y por ello, de muchacho, tuvo que procurarse de cualquier modo lo indispensable para vestirse con decencia. Luego el dinero le sirvió para ser más eficaz. (182)

His preoccupation is power, not money. Simultaneously, one is able to recognize the negative image that he has of his relatives.

From Trujillo's family, Vargas Llosa takes us to the dictator's relationship with the Dominican people. It is interesting to note that such relationship is one of control and almost fatherly protection. As explained by Ángel Rama, the reader is able to know about the country through its dictator. Then, it is possible to say that Trujillo believes that he is the father and the benefactor of these people:

Si no hubiera sido así ¿habría hecho esos regalos al pueblo, esas dádivas multitudinarias cada 24 de octubre, a fin de que los dominicanos celebraran el cumpleaños del Jefe? [...] ¿Y cuántos muchísimos más en regalos a sus compadres y ahijados, en esos bautizos colectivos, en la capilla de Palacio, en que, desde hacía tres décadas, una y hasta dos veces por semana, se convertía en padrino de lo menos un centenar de recién nacidos? [...] Una inversión productiva, por supuesto ocurrencia suya, en su primer año de gobierno, gracias a su conocimiento profundo de la psicología dominicana. (182)

The author shows us from Trujillo's perspective how the dictator perceives his own actions towards the Dominican people and the benefits that come as a result.

So far, I have dealt with Urania's and Trujillo's perspectives, however Joaquín Balaguer is also a character that brings new light to the narrative. It is important to note that Balaguer was the new President after the dictator's death. The following passage shows his point of view about religion and the state:

La religión le daba un orden espiritual, una ética con que afrontar la vida. Dudaba a veces de la trascendencia, de dios, pero nunca de la función irremplazable del catolicismo como instrumento de contención social de las pasiones y apetitos desquiciadores de la bestia humana. Y, en la República Dominicana, como fuerza constitutiva de la nacionalidad, igual que la lengua española. Sin la fe católica, el país caería en la desintegración y la barbarie. En cuanto a creer, él practicaba la receta de San Ignacio de Loyola, en sus *Ejercicios espirituales*: actuar como si se creyera, mimando los ritos y preceptos: misas, oraciones, confesiones, comuniones. (329)

Religion for Balaguer was a tool that was helpful and that gave the country a sense of identity and nationality. On the other hand, religious rituals, according to Balaguer, are essential when attempting to indoctrinate a community.

In contrast, once Trujillo is dead, Vargas Llosa shows a different Balaguer:

Salió y pidió al retén de guardia que despertara a su chofer [...] anticipó las horas siguientes: enfrentamientos entre guarniciones rebeldes y leales y posible intervención militar norteamericana. Washington requería algún simulacro constitucional para esta acción, y, en estos momentos, el Presidente de la República representaba la legalidad. Su cargo era decorativo, cierto. Pero, muerto

Trujillo, se cargaba de realidad. Dependía de su conducta que pasara, de mero embeleco, a auténtico Jefe de Estado de la República Dominicana. (490)

Hence, Balaguer anticipates what will take place in the hours after Trujillo's death. He wants to become the new president. Yet, the following passage, illustrates the chaotic atmosphere among the members of the government caused by the dictator's absence:

Una simple ojeada le bastó para saber que esa tribu de pobres diablos había perdido la brújula. Petán, agitando una metralleta, daba vueltas sobre sí mismo como un perro que quiere morderse la cola, sudando y vociferando sandeces sobre los cocuyos de la cordillera, su Ejército particular, en tanto que Héctor Bienvenido (Negro), el ex Presidente, parecía atacado de idiotismo catatónico [...] Había un vacío y era preciso llenarlo cuanto antes. (491)

Trujillo was dead and the members of the government needed to fill the void. Nevertheless, thirty years in power was difficult to disregard.

It should not go without saying that the author includes the conspirators' perspectives: "Este clima pervertido motiva exactamente la rebeldía de unos hombres completamente defraudados por el régimen, que se tematiza en la tercera línea narrativa. La argumentación de los conspiradores conecta con la carga ideológica de la novela, a la que el propio autor siempre está atento." (Snauwaert 228) The reader is aware of their thoughts and fears throughout the preparation of the dictator's murder.

Imbert is a character that expresses his frustration towards the dictatorship:

...la crítica más aguda, sin embargo, es que este absolutismo compromete a nunca jamás la libertad, como lo atestigua Imbert, uno de los insurrectos. Pensó en lo

endiablado del sistema de Trujillo que había sido capaz de crear, en el que todos los dominicanos tarde o temprano participaban como cómplices, un sistema del que sólo se podían ponerse a salvo los exiliados (no siempre) y los muertos. [...] Asistimos pues a una acusación de la violencia, del desbaratamiento de la vida que caracterizó este periodo. (Snauwaert 229)

In chapter one of this project, power was one of the main topics. Noam Chomsky elaborates on the subject of power:

...in any other institutions, you can often find some dissidents hanging around in the woodwork [...] but if they become too disruptive or too obstreperous [...] they're likely to be kicked out. The standard thing, though, is that they won't make it within the institutions in the first place [...] So in most cases, the people who make it through the institutions and are able to remain in them have already internalized the right kinds of beliefs: it's not a problem for them to be obedient, they already are obedient, that's how they got there. (qtd. in Mitchel 247)

In La Fiesta del Chivo, several characters, which become disruptive for the dictatorship, are set aside as part of the *woodwork* that Chomsky mentions, that is the case of Urania's father, Cerebritito.

On the other hand, Antonio's view, another conspirator, is included as well:

El Generalísimo, en su escritorio, lucía un uniforme que Antonio no recordaba: guerrera blanca y larga, de faldones, con abotonadura de oro y grandes charreteras de dorados flecos sobre la pechera [...] La luz de la lamparilla iluminaba la cara ancha, cuidadosamente rasurada [...] y el bigotito mosca, imitado de Hitler (a quien,

le había oído decir alguna vez Antonio, el Jefe admiraba “no por sus ideas, sino por su manera de llevar el uniforme y presidir los desfiles.” (128)

He observes El Jefe’s uniform and his meticulous image. Furthermore, the connection to Hitler is key since Trujillo values the icon of a military man more than the ability to govern. Meanwhile, Antonio’s standpoint is an example of the way most Dominicans feel about the regime:

Pero, aquello del libre albedrío lo afectó. Tal vez por eso decidió que Trujillo debía morir. Para recuperar, él y los dominicanos, la facultad de aceptar o rechazar por lo menos el trabajo con el que uno se ganaba la vida. Tony no sabía lo que era eso [...] Debía de ser una cosa linda [...] Trujillo les arrebató a los dominicanos hacía ya treinta y un años: el libre albedrío. (208)

This man has never known another life different from the one controlled by Trujillo. Free will was not present in Dominican life.

Chomsky speaks about the subject of control:

And it makes very good sense for a system to be set up like that: powerful institutions don’t want to be investigated, obviously. Why would they? They don’t want the public to know how they work – maybe the people inside them understand how they work, but they don’t want anybody else to know, because that would threaten and undermine their power. So one should *expect* the institutions to function in such a way as to protect themselves – and some of the ways in which they protect themselves are by various subtle techniques of ideological control like these. (qtd. in Mitchell 242)

Trujillo also protected himself in order to maintain his control over the country. At the same time, Salvador, another conspirator, goes through a moral dilemma:

Cuando, por fin, levantó los ojos, el nuncio tenía un libro de santo Tomás de Aquino en las manos. Su cara fresca le sonreía con aire pícaro. Uno de sus dedos señalaba un pasaje, en la página abierta. Salvador se inclinó y leyó: “La eliminación física de la Bestia es bien vista por Dios si con ella se libera a un pueblo” [...] Mataría a la Bestia y Dios y su Iglesia lo perdonarían, manchándose de sangre lavaría la sangre que la Bestia hacía correr en su patria. (266)

This passage shows Salvador’s desire to kill Trujillo (la Bestia) and his conflict with his religious principles. By killing Trujillo, Salvador will free his country from repression. This character sees this assassination as his duty towards his family and community.

After covering topics such as memory and the different ways in which Vargas Llosa presents the characters’ points of view, it is helpful to take into account that La Fiesta del Chivo opens doors to discussions based on its structure and its nature as fiction.

Patricia Waugh, in Metafiction, analyzes the nature of the text. She explains:

Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. (2)

Thus, when speaking about metafiction, it is important to keep in mind that such type of writing will focus on the relationship between fiction and reality and will explore the structural nature of fiction. Actually, the increasing interest in “meta” levels has a relation to the cultural awareness in areas such as language. The idea of an objective meaning is not reliable anymore. (Waugh 3) Furthermore, a metafictional novel will question the conventions of tradition and will bring to the discussion a new critical perspective. (Waugh 11)

Metafictional writing is also part of the belief that history is not absolute, which is a fundamental topic in this project: “Contemporary metafictional writing is both a response and a contribution to an even more thoroughgoing sense that reality or history are provisional: no longer a world of eternal verities but a series of constructions, artifices, impermanent structures.” (Waugh 7) In effect, metafiction is a tendency within the realms of the novel that brings to light tensions in the structure and the construction process of the narrative. (Waugh 14) Additionally, metafictional narratives discard monologic discourses.

For these reasons, it is possible to state that La Fiesta del Chivo is a metafictional novel. In fact, metafiction revises reality and the way historians record it. (Waugh 18) Historians review discourses that have favored an absolute truth or a dogmatic perspective of past events. Narrative structures favor multiplicity and change. Moreover, scholars usually study simultaneously metafiction and Postmodernism:

Metafiction is a mode of writing with a broader cultural movement often referred to as post-modernism. Postmodernism can be seen to exhibit the same sense of crisis

and loss of belief in an external authoritative system of order as that which prompted modernism. Both affirm the constructive powers of the mind in the face of apparent phenomenal chaos. (Waugh 21)

Actually, metafiction focuses on the belief that novels have intricate structures and it is not easy to recognize their multiple levels. (Waugh 29) Moreover, metafictional novels have left behind traditional or dogmatic ways of presenting the facts:

Metafictional novels at this end of the scale have abandoned “role-playing”[...] and have embraced a [...] concept of “language games”. They function through forms of radical decontextualization [...]. The logic of the everyday world is replaced by forms of contradiction and discontinuity, radical shifts of context which suggest that “reality” as well as “fiction” is merely one more game with words. (Waugh 136)

A system of tensions and sometimes oppositions substitutes the conventional logic of reality.

In contrast, due to its assembly, metafiction, specifically in the novel, may take the form of parody. (Waugh 4) In fact, parody comments on particular texts and their conventions. Waugh indicates that,

Metafictional parody reveals how a particular set of contents was expressed in a particular set of conventions recognized as “literature” by its readers, and it considers what relevance these may still have for readers situated at a different point in history. It exploits the indeterminacy of the text, forcing the reader to revise his or her rigid preconceptions based on literary and social conventions, by

playing off contemporary and earlier paradigms against each other and thus defeating the reader's expectations about both of them. (67)

At the same time, it allows for reassessment of strict rules about literature and society. Therefore, criticism takes place: "In metafiction, the criticism is provided in the work itself by the process, which produces the joke or parody, for this method of displacement and substitution carries with it an implicit critical function. Parody in metafiction, despite what its critics might argue, is more a joke." (Waugh 78) Hence, parody opens doors to criticism, however the text provides the criticism. Later on in this chapter, I will analyze how different historical preconceptions and myths are explored in Vargas Llosa's novel.

After focusing on the metafictional nature of La Fiesta del Chivo, it is fundamental to consider how myth also draws attention to the nature of history. In the previous chapter, I concentrated on myth, especially basing my arguments on Barthes' work. At this point, I will attempt to shed light into several examples of myth and how they function in Vargas Llosa's novel:

Los mitos como reflejos fantásticos en la mente de los hombres, de algo que en algún momento existió, o se creía que existió, son ficciones inherentes al desarrollo de la humanidad y por lo tanto tienen una razón históricamente determinada. Los hombres son los que crean los mitos; principalmente lo hacen por necesidades culturales, ideológicas, psicológicas y hasta políticas. (Roldán 21)

Thus, myths, created by men, are reflections of the human mind.

Moreover, myths are related to our conceptions of time and history. (Roldán 21) In addition, there is a variety of myths, however some of them are of great interest to Vargas

Llosa. In fact, the myths that are born in specific nations are efficient. They become systematized and are used to dominate. (Roldán 23) In the precise case of Vargas Llosa:

...el mito de la libertad en abstracto, de la democracia sin apellido, de la igualdad ante la ley, de las elecciones libres y soberanas, de las oportunidades para todos, del héroe que se hizo solo, del mercado que premia, no al más fuerte, sino al más capaz, de las ganancias producto del esfuerzo, y de la riqueza como consecuencia del ahorro, etc. Estos son los principales mitos, que en los últimos años defiende [...] Vargas Llosa. (Roldán 24)

Nevertheless, it Vargas Llosa works with a variety of myths that appear in the history of the Dominican Republic.

One of the myths, at the center of the novel, is Trujillo. For instance, Trujillo's death, presented in the novel, is a national event. Every person in the country became affected by it. The following passage refers to Trujillo's funeral:

Por el camino, veían por las ventanas la gigantesca, la proliferante multitud, a la que se seguían añadiendo grupos de hombres y mujeres venidos de las afueras de Ciudad Trujillo y pueblos vecinos. La cola, en filas de cuatro o cinco, era de varios kilómetros y los guardias armados apenas podían contenerla. Llevaban muchas horas esperando. Había escenas desgarradoras, llantos, alardes histéricos, entre los que ya habían alcanzado los graderíos de Palacio y se sentían cerca de la cámara fúnebre del Generalísimo. (502)

As seen before in Santa Evita, Trujillo's funeral could be compared to the funeral of a saint. The corpse was adored and contemplated for days. According to Jean Baudrillard, in Simulacra and Simulation:

In contrast to the primitive rite, which foresees the official and sacrificial death of the king (the king or the chief is nothing without the promise of his sacrifice), the modern political imaginary goes increasingly in the direction of delaying, of concealing for as long as possible, the death of the head of state. This obsession has accumulated since the era of revolutions and of charismatic leaders: Hitler, Franco, Mao having no "legitimate" heirs, no filiation of power, see themselves force to perpetuate themselves indefinitely – popular myth never wishes to believe them dead. The pharaohs already did this: it was always one and the same person who incarnated the successive pharaohs. (25)

This need of perpetuation is evident in Trujillo's funeral. His image as father and protector is so significant in the country that it cannot die.

Meanwhile, Trujillo's mother is another figure treated as a myth by the Dominicans: "¡El Día de las Madres! [...] Las niñas elegidas del Colegio Santo Domingo para traerle flores a Mamá Julia, la Excelsa Matrona, progenitora del Benefactor, espejo y símbolo de la madre quisqueyana." (21) In this passage, previously approached in this chapter, Trujillo's mother could be considered the mother of the entire Dominican nation. Such admiration is related to her image as the dictator's mother. Even Trujillo's son, Ramfis, is portrayed as a myth: "el hijito, el bello Ramfis... ¡Cómo temblabas que me fuera a echar el ojo!" (140). He was in the fantasies of every young Dominican girl.

After reviewing passages of the novel that draw attention to a number of myths which appear in Dominican history, it is necessary to approach them from the stand point of their construction and how they function in Vargas Llosa's project. In order to do so, I will rely on Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin's views. According to Bakhtin, the novel as genre is constantly revising and examining itself. When discussing the novel, he also focuses his attention on the literary genre, originally medieval, known as grotesque realism. Distinctive of this genre is the use of degradation. In La Fiesta del Chivo, there are different moments when images of degradation contrast with the mythological figures of the government. In addition, Bakhtin makes a distinction between the grotesque and the classical. That is, classical aesthetic is related to man as a whole, clean of all biological aspects connected to birth and human development. Interestingly, Vargas Llosa includes descriptions of Trujillo, which show the military man as a whole, as a myth. However, such descriptions are accompanied by their opposite.

The following passage is an example of the grotesque in La Fiesta del Chivo: "Ansioso, observó las sábanas: la informe manchita grisácea envilecía la blancura del hilo [...] Este no era un enemigo que pudiera derrotar como a esos cientos, miles, que había enfrentado y vencido a lo largo de los años..." (29) El Jefe as a myth is lowered to the level of a human being. He is almost a prisoner of the biological aspects of his body. The human body is not an enemy that he can control. These moments are abundant throughout the novel:

Y, en ese momento, como un garrotazo en la cabeza, lo sobrecogió la duda [...] bajó la cabeza, como para concentrarse en una idea, y, aguzando la vista, ansiosamente

espió [...] Ahí estaba: la mancha oscura [...] Lo sacudió un ramalazo de rabia. Podía dominar a los hombres, poner a tres millones de dominicanos de rodillas, pero no controlar su esfínter. (181)

In this passage, Trujillo's inability to control his body causes frustration, which contrasts with his ability to control men in his country.

Vargas Llosa places Trujillo's son in grotesque situations as well:

El general Ramfis Trujillo, jefe del Estado Mayor de las Fuerzas Armadas de la República Dominicana, jugando al polo y tirándose a las bailarinas del Lido de París, mientras su padre se batía solo aquí, contra la Iglesia, los Estados Unidos, los conspiradores y los tarados como Pupo Román. (416)

The respectable image of Trujillo's son is broken, by introducing this passage, which degrades him.

Urania's comment about Trujillo's inability to act according to his reputation as *macho* enriches the narrative:

- Decía que no hay justicia en este mundo. Por qué le ocurría esto después de luchar tanto, por este país ingrato, por esta gente sin honor. Le hablaba a Dios [...] Él sabía fajarse contra enemigos de carne y hueso [...] No podía tolerar el golpe bajo, que no lo dejaran defenderse [...] Porque ese güevo que había roto tantos coñitos, ya no se paraba. Eso hacía llorar al titán. ¿Para reírse, verdad? (560)

Urania elaborates on the details of the night at Casa de Caoba with the dictator. Despite his power over the country, his body controls him. His image as El Generalísimo and his

image as a man, in a sexist society, is tainted once again. Another character that described as a grotesque figure is Senator Henry Chirinos, one of Trujillo's loyal servants:

El pelo que le faltaba en la cabeza le sobresalía de las orejas, cuyas matas de vellos negrísimos irrumpían, agresivas, como grotesca compensación a la calvicie del Constitucionalista Beodo. ¿También él le había puesto ese apodo, antes de rebautizarlo, en su fuero íntimo, la Inmundicia Viviente? El Benefactor no lo recordaba. [...] Tenía la costumbre de acariciar las sebosas cerdas que anidaban en sus orejas y, aunque el Generalísimo, con su manía obsesiva por la limpieza, se lo había prohibido delante de él, ahora lo estaba haciendo... (163)

The contrast is drastic since Vargas Llosa describes a member of the government who works closely with the dictator in a revolting manner. At the same time, Trujillo's perspective becomes clear through the name that he gives Chirinos.

Another important way in which the author examines the process of writing history is the understanding of time in the novel. In the essays compiled in The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin also explores the process of assimilation of the historical time and space in literature. More specifically, in this project, I will refer to the term "chronotope". Chronotope is a relation between time and space expressed in literature:

Literally, "time-space". A unit of analysis for studying texts according to the ratio and nature of the temporal and spatial categories represented. The distinctiveness of this concept as opposed to most other uses of time and space in literary analysis lies in the fact that neither category is privileged; they are utterly interdependent. (Bakhtin 425)

Bakhtin indicates that chronotope is a literary category. In other words, time becomes artistically visible and space responds to the movements of time, plot and history. Furthermore, a chronotope defines the artistic unity of a literary work. In fact, in art, time and space are inseparable. (Bakhtin 243) Therefore, a decisive feature when discussing the topic of chronotope is the subject of the road common to different types of novels. The road is always one that passes through recognizable or familiar territory. (Bakhtin 245) Chronotopes are then the organizational centers of the events in a novel. The chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative become tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative. (Bakhtin 250) A chronotope will make the events within a narrative concrete. It is a means by which time and space become materialized. It is consequently, the center of the representation.

There are several examples in La Fiesta del Chivo of chronotopes. For instance in the first pages of the narrative, time and space come together. Urania walks along a familiar road: “Entonces, el Hotel Jaragua miraba al Malecón de frente. Ahora, de costado. La memoria le devuelve aquella imagen -¿de ese día?- de la niña tomada de la mano por su padre, entrando en el restaurante del hotel, para almorzar los dos solos.” (12) In this passage, the Jaragua Hotel is the place where present and past come together. Additionally, the streets of the city fuse also the present and the past:

En vez de dar media vuelta y emprender el regreso hacia el Jaragua, sus pasos, no su voluntad, la llevan a contornear el Hispaniola y regresar por Independencia, una

avenida que, si no la traiciona su memoria, avanza desde aquí [...] Cuántas veces caminaste de la mano de tu padre...(19)

In contrast, while Trujillo takes his daily walk, the streets and the years of the dictatorship meet: “La caminata por la Máximo Gómez hervía de reminiscencias. Las casas que iba dejando atrás eran símbolos de personajes y episodios descollantes de sus treinta y un años en el poder”. (406) The street Máximo Gómez is the place where one can be a witness of the Trujillo Era. The buildings and houses are traces of such years. It is essential to point out that the idea of places such as the street or the foyer is key when speaking about chronotopes:

In Dostoievsky, for example, the threshold and related chronotopes – those of the staircase, the front hall and corridor, as well as the chronotopes of the street and square that extended those spaces into the open air – are the main places of action in his works, places where crisis events occur, the falls, resurrections, renewals, epiphanies, decisions that determine the whole life of a man. (Bakhtin 248)

During his daily walks along the street Máximo Gómez, Trujillo makes several decisions that are critical to the Dominican Republic. On the other hand, political alliances are born and broken during El Jefe’s walk along this street.

In addition, when Urania visits her father for the first time after many years, the staircase is the place where she remembers, as mentioned previously in this chapter, and where her life changes:

Sube la escalera de pasamanos descolorido y sin los maceteros con flores que ella recordaba [...] Ésta era una casita moderna, próspera [...] ha caído en picada, es un

tugurio [...] en el viejo sillón de cuero de respaldar y brazos anchos, el anciano embutido en un pijama azul y pantuflas... (70)

The past becomes tangible for Urania.

In sum, this chapter has approached La Fiesta del Chivo from a variety of perspectives. The novel about dictatorships has been studied in the light of the postmodern text and therefore metafiction. Memory has also played an important part of the discussion, since it offers another version aside from the one provided by traditional history. Examples have illustrated different points of view such as those of Urania, Trujillo, Balaguer and the conspirators. I examined a variety of myths within Dominican history as well. As a result, the degradation of these myths started the discussion of Bakhtin's ideas on the grotesque. Finally, I explained the term chronotope and illustrated the discussion with several episodes from the novel in order to understand time and space in Vargas Llosa's narrative. By reviewing history new debates provide a new understanding of the text such as a text that draws attention towards its own structure and nature. Therefore, the criticism takes place within the text. In the past, this self-criticism did not take place, a chronological organization and a unilateral understanding of history prevailed.

CONCLUSION

Tomás Eloy Martínez and Mario Vargas Llosa show through their novels the intricate relation between history and literature. Both authors are concerned with the structure of the novel and how it reflects the historical writing and the reading process. Furthermore, they deal with topics such as different versions of history, memory, and the self-reflexive nature of the novel. These writers also revise history and open new areas of critical and historical discussion. Such new areas of discussion are significant since the understanding of the present culture, often times, depends on existing representations of the past. Postmodernism is the stage where such perception takes place (Hutcheon, Politics 58). The chapters in this project have covered the previous aspects in the light of Postmodernism. For instance, the structures of these novels favor multiplicity and fragmentation of time and chaos. On the other hand, memory discards a rigid version of past events, enhancing the discussion of a system of different voices and story lines. By examining myth and simulation in these narratives, writers are able to tell the story of a community.

Postmodernism served as a background for a discussion of the New Historical Latin American Novel. The writing and rewriting of history are fundamental topics in this study since they lead to new versions of history. Rewriting gives a sense of revision or reconsideration of a text. At the same time, it points towards the examination of the construction of a text. For this reason, it is relevant to remember that postmodern fiction illustrates the process of turning events into facts through the filtering and interpreting of documents. (Hutcheon, The Politics of Postmodernism 57). Consequently, the point of

view of the writer will be key when examining a text. Thus, when approaching the topic of history in a postmodern text a unilateral vision of the events will not be sufficient. Perspectives will vary depending on who tells the story and when.

Historians are creators of stories and artists. They have become storytellers. These writers shape their findings according to their creative purposes. In fact, the power of historians comes from their ability and opportunity to tell the story of past events. Moreover, historical legitimization depends on power or who has that power. Throughout history, those with power –or those in power- have dictated the type of knowledge that individuals will acquire and eventually use. Foucault's ideas on power and the power of knowledge are significant in order to understand the recording of history. By examining history and its structure, one can understand the systems of power and their influence or ramifications. The systems of power in our culture are directly related to history. We can know the past today through its textual traces, in the present: documents, paintings, architecture, cinema, among others. (Hutcheon, Politics 78). Therefore, the recording of history is central in Santa Evita and La Fiesta del Chivo since literature and history coexist in both novels.

Postmodern art allows us to revise and even question traditional artistic conventions. However, it is necessary to study the differences between Modernism and Postmodernism. I covered numerous critical views in this project, such as Foucault's, Bakhtin's, White's and Hutcheon's. Tomás Eloy Martínez's novel Santa Evita illustrates a variety of postmodern characteristics. Interestingly, memory and fiction become significant when analyzing history in the Argentine novel. There are not boundaries that

separate stories and facts. In fact, Julio Cortázar, in a note that opens one of his novels, El examen, states that: “Escribí *El examen* a mediados de 1950, en un Buenos Aires donde la imaginación poco tenía que agregar a la historia para obtener los resultados que verá el lector.” (Cortázar 7) Interestingly, the author refers to one of the periods represented in Santa Evita. In contrast, Postmodernism allows the artist to revise and question conventional and dogmatic structures, then parody and myth are key when examining novels such as Santa Evita.

Eva Perón became a myth and her representation or representations were one of Martínez’s main interests. For this reason, he included the story and the trajectory of multiple Evas, after death, in his narrative. In the mean time, I approach this story through Baudrillard’s ideas about simulation. Martínez mentions in his narrative numerous authors who also became interested in Eva Duarte and her death. One of these authors is Jorge Luis Borges. The writer, in his short story “El simulacro” presents a doll in a box and he comments on this particular scene: “El enlutado no era Perón y la muñeca rubia no era la mujer Eva Duarte, pero tampoco Perón era Perón ni Eva era Eva sino desconocidos o anónimos (cuyo nombre secreto y cuyo rostro verdadero ignoramos)...” (Borges 30) Eva becomes many copies. Then one event can result on different perceptions or interpretations. On the other hand, fiction and history opened the discussion of the importance of the documents in Martínez’s novel. Documents coexist and become as important as the plot. Consequently, as readers, we are aware of the recording process of these documents.

Mario Vargas Llosa's novel La Fiesta del Chivo also shows the interest of the author in history and memory. Since this novel is about a dictatorship, then an overview of dictatorships in Latin America started the last chapter of this project. According to Ángel Rama, the novel as genre provided the necessary flexibility to write about dictatorships in these countries. It was significant to understand how dictators and communities behaved in order to study such cultures, since power became centralized in one person. (Rama 10) By examining the dictator as figure and archetype, one can have a clear vision of how power influenced people in countries such as the Dominican Republic. Interestingly the novel starts with a few lines taken from a popular song: "El pueblo celebra / con gran entusiasmo / la Fiesta del Chivo / el treinta de mayo. *Mataron al Chivo*. Merengue dominicano." (9) Vargas Llosa opens his narrative with a product of popular culture. A key historical event such as Trujillo's assassination is part of the Dominican memory, and artistic expression. The Peruvian author will tell the story of this community. From the beginning, it was clear that this novel, as well as Santa Evita escaped the boundaries of a biography. It was essential to approach La Fiesta del Chivo from the perspective of the postmodern text, since it provides a new way of looking at history.

When speaking about history and literature, the manner in which reality and fiction come together becomes fundamental. As Patricia Waugh explained, metafiction is a term used when analyzing fictional writing. A metafictional novel questions traditional ideas about the novel and therefore history. Santa Evita and La Fiesta del Chivo are metafictional novels. One of these ideas is that one perspective is not absolute anymore.

(Waugh 3) There are no eternal truths or constructions. For this reason, myths are subject to examination and careful study. A detailed explanation of myth showed how Vargas Llosa addresses this topic in his novel. Trujillo as myth was devalued. For this reason, I approached Bakhtin's perspectives about the novel as genre. According to Bakhtin, the novel as genre is constantly revising itself. Examples of chronotope and the grotesque can be observed in La Fiesta del Chivo.

Thus, what do Santa Evita and La Fiesta del Chivo say about the New Historical Latin American Novel? Is there a reason to study them together? Why are they considered postmodern texts? Historical novels such as La gloria de don Ramiro, presented the description of a time and a character from one point of view. Fragmentation was not a characteristic of time in the narrative. A chronological structure was one of the main aspects of this type of novels. The historical novel is a way of reading or discovering what lies underneath the written word. In Latin American countries, where dictatorships have taken place, the novel has been a resourceful way of approaching past events. The intricacy of these nations' political realities requires the novel's flexible nature in order to tell the story of what happened. The New Historical Novel differs drastically from this model. In fact, novels about history in the 1960s and 1970s showed an interest in substituting the official history with fictional events. Santa Evita and La Fiesta del Chivo present reality in a new light. Both novels tell the stories of two prominent historical figures from a variety of perspectives. Martínez and Vargas Llosa become observers, reporters and even sociologists in order to gather the testimonies and the myths that surrounded Trujillo and Eva Perón. Such myths show the reader the

characteristics of a community and the models become essential. These models are part of a system of repetition. At the same time, one story is the beginning or the starting point for all the other stories. Consequently, the act of writing has taken a new direction as well.

Furthermore, it is not possible to establish a dialogue with a history that is considered a reliable truth anymore. For instance, Vargas Llosa, when describing one of many crimes that took place in the Dominican Republic during Trujillo's regime, touches on the subject of history and fiction:

Toda la República Dominicana se enteró de aquella matanza de la manera veloz y misteriosa en que las noticias circulaban de boca en boca y de casa en casa y en pocas horas llegaban a las extremidades más remotas, aunque no apareciera una línea en la prensa y muchas veces aquellas noticias transmitidas por el tam tam humano se colorearan, enanizaran o agigantarán en el recorrido hasta volverse mitos, leyendas, ficciones, casi sin relación con lo acaecido. (198)

History and fiction become one. They complement one another and the novel brings to the surface a new voice.

In addition, historical novels are a result of a combination of the information found in documents and the interpretation of such information. In fact, a historical novel may become independent from a particular document and may take a new direction (Jitrik 23). Such direction will deal with a system of voices and these voices will interact with each other. Fragments and pieces of different stories substitute an organized chronological

structure. The writing in Santa Evita and La Fiesta del Chivo creates new spaces of discourse.

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